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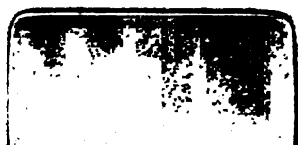
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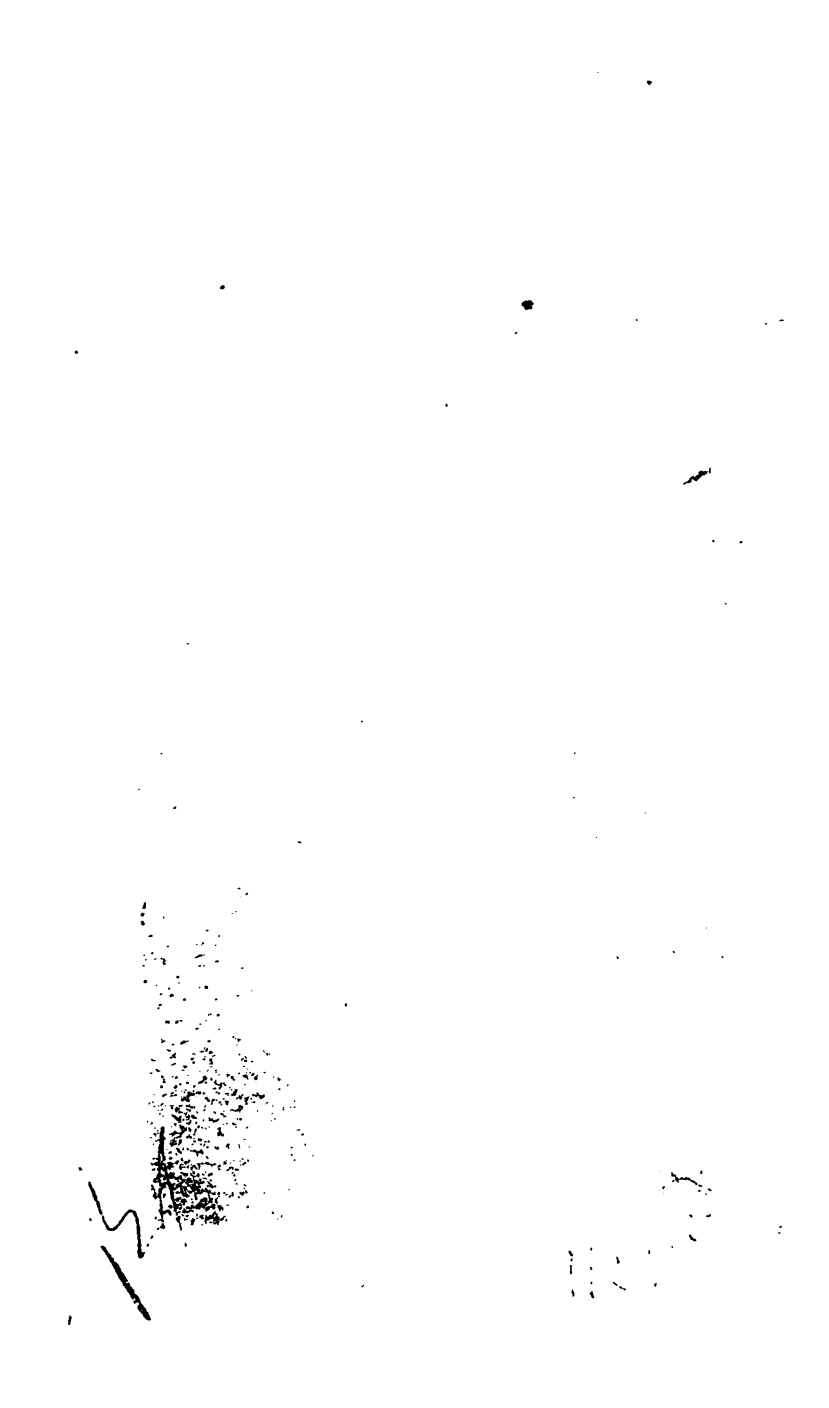


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"Oh, here, he exclaimed, 'I can love for a year undecorated!'"

*Widened to make the
house the least more it.*

THE

YOUNG WANDERER'S CAVE,

AND

OTHER TALES.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "THE CHILDREN'S FIRESIDE."

LONDON:

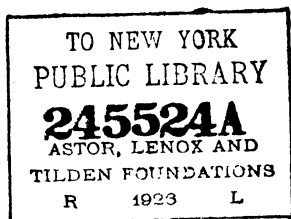
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PREFACE.

A WORK presents but an unfinished appearance, unless a Preface be affixed to it; yet so few persons, especially young persons, take the trouble to read a "tiresome, dry Preface," that the present might be spared, did I not feel anxious to greet the juvenile readers of a former little work of mine—"THE CHILDREN'S FIRESIDE,"—with a hope that they may find as much amusement in reading "THE YOUNG WANDERER'S CAVE," as they received in the perusal of the first named set of tales. I speak the more confidently, because I

am in possession of numerous assurances that the tales have been read with pleasure by many happy groups.

I have been further incited to write this address, in order to mention, that if I should be so fortunate as to create a wish among my present readers to become further acquainted with my little productions, it affords me pleasure to inform them, that measures are already in progress, by which I shall be enabled to offer another work for their perusal at that joyous season—the Midsummer Holidays—when sunny skies and playful breezes shall invite them to the shade of leafy arbours. At that sweet time,

“When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees ;”

when the fervent voice of the grasshopper chirping in his torrid joy,

—————“ runs
From hedge to hedge, about the new mown mead ;”

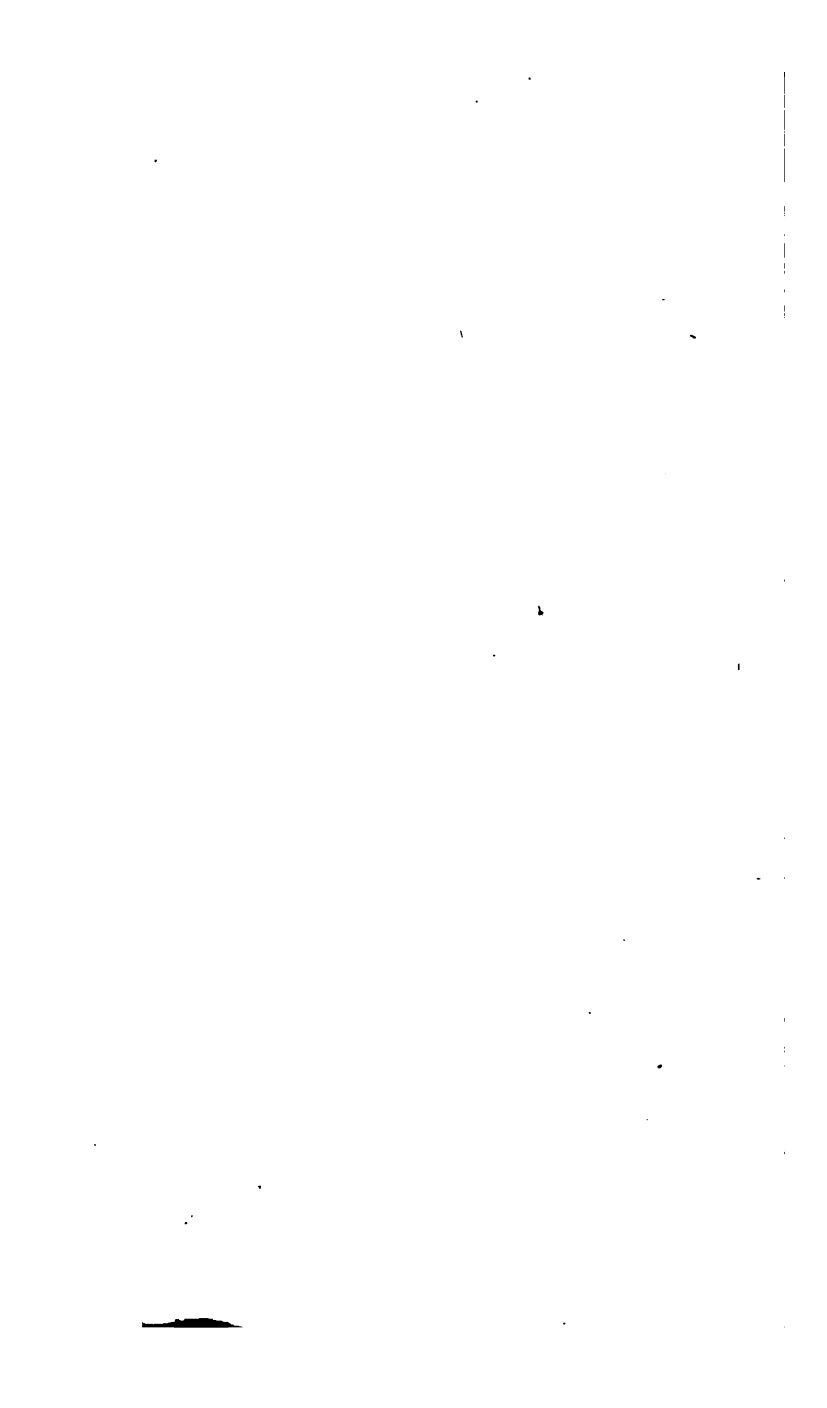
when flowers droop their languid heads, and

weary cattle seek the beechen shade, or silent pool, when the canopy of o'erhanging boughs becomes a choice retreat,—*then* I hope that many a solitary reader, or social group, may find the perusal of the adventures of a wandering Sailor an occupation that will detract nothing from the enjoyment of a tranquil hour. Till *then*, my young friends,

Farewell !

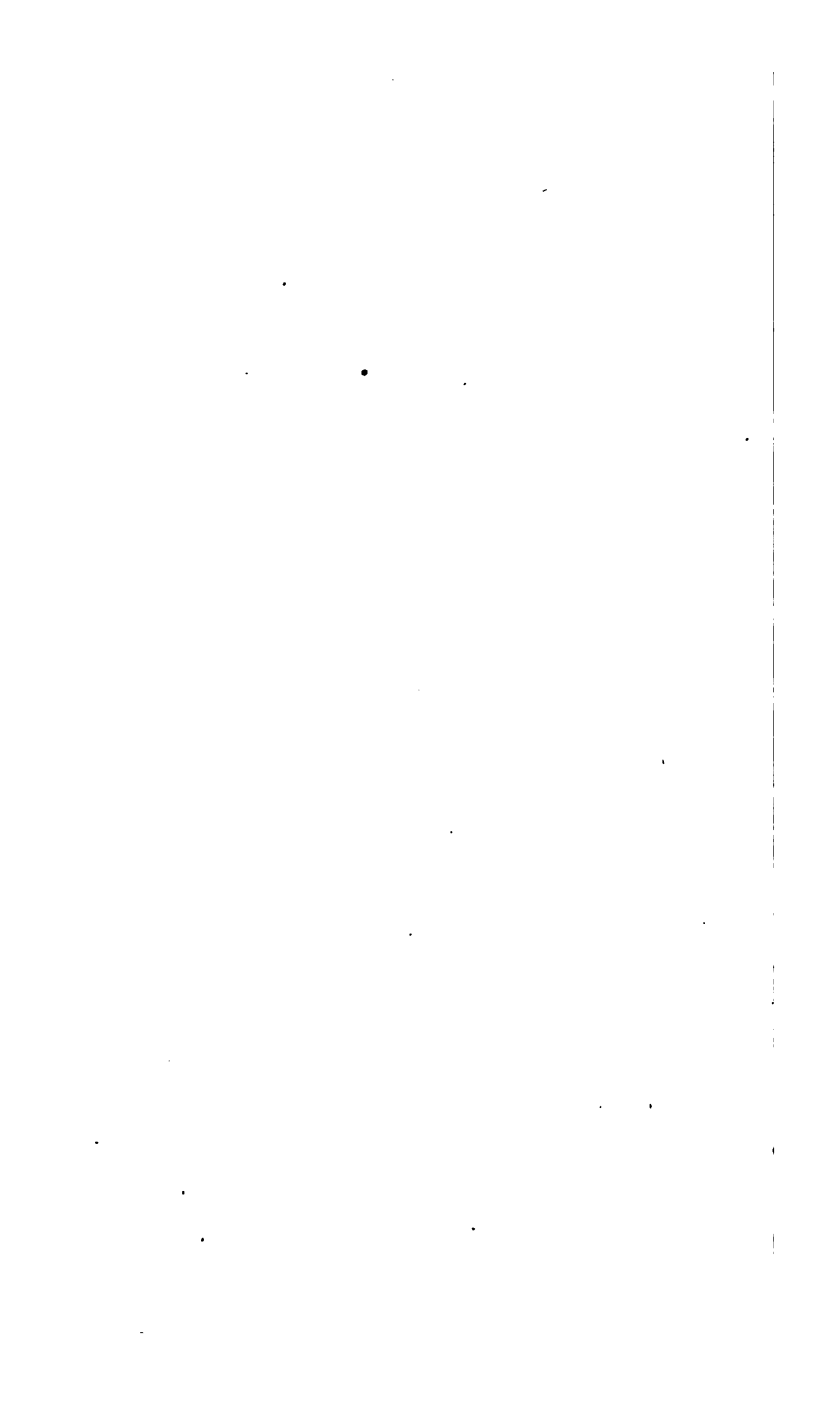
I. J. T.

January 1st, 1830.



THE
YOUNG WANDERER'S CAVE;
OR,
THE INNOCENT PRISONER.

“Every prisoner is considered innocent till he be proved guilty.”
English Law.



THE
YOUNG WANDERER'S CAVE;
OR,
THE INNOCENT PRISONER.

“How kind of my Uncle Hull, to invite me down to York!—wasn't it, Sarah?” said Stephen Bancroft to his sister, as they were “minding the shop,” in Bishopsgate-street.

“Yes, and how good of him to send you two sovereigns to pay your journey!” replied Sarah. “How shall you travel—outside the York mail?”

“Why, I've been thinking, that if I walk part of the way, this fine weather, and ride sometimes in a waggon, or anything of that sort,—that I shall go cheaper, and so be able to save some of

the money ; for father says he can't afford me another hat ; and mine looks so shabby that I shall be ashamed to wear it in York ;—and then, you know, I can buy myself one directly I get there—can't I ?”

“ A very good thought of your's, Stephen ;—but then, do you know, I'm thinking that mother won't like you to walk all that way, nearly two hundred miles, without anybody with you ; for—”

“ Why I should *ride* all that way without any one to take care of me, you goose !—Come, come, don't you say anything to my mother to frighten her, and she will let me walk, I know.”

“ Oh no, I won't say a word ;—how I wish I was going !—I wonder what sort of a girl my cousin is !—Let's see—Phœbe is my age, and John is nearly yours ;—I wonder if they do anything in the business !—I suppose, though, he is 'prenticed to my uncle, as you are going to be to father ; I wish our trade was a cutler's too ; its a great deal genteeler than a shoemaker's !—When do you think you shall come home again, Stephen ? though we do quarrel so sometimes, I shall be very sorry while you are away !—But hark—mother is calling us to

dinner ; here comes father—I can see him through the green curtain ;—now, Stephen, you can ask leave to walk part of the way to York.” The brother and sister then went into the little back parlour to dine, and while they ate their hasty meal, Stephen won his mother’s consent to his own mode of journeying ; so, on the next morning, the 15th of July, he found himself trudging merrily through Kingsland, on the great north road, before the sun had risen, or the daily smoke, from the thousands of chimnies, had obscured from his sight that immense mass of buildings which he had left behind. Sometimes riding, and sometimes walking, our happy hero, with his blue bundle of linen, reached Cambridgeshire, without any accident having befallen him, and we must leave him singing “I’ve been roaming,” as he entered the little village of Paxton, near Biggleswade, where he intended to sleep that night—for we have to go back to London, in order that we may see the inside of a gaming-house in Oxford-street.

In one of the rooms, then, which was closely shut up, although the sun was yet shining, there sat two men, with sharp, keen, hard faces, watch-

ing each other's every movement, with all the acuteness and malignant hatred of sharpers. Each styled the other "friend;" each assisted the other to cheat all who fell in their way; each was dressed like a gentleman, the better to deceive his victims; each suspected the other—(his "friend,") and both were rogues. Their names were Montague and Jones. The former had once been a genteel and respectable young man, but being fond of "*play*," that is, of cards, dice, &c., and falling into the company of a set of sharpers, one of whom was this very Jones, poor Montague soon became as bad as they were themselves. These two men visited most of the celebrated gaming-houses in England; and wherever horse-racing, prize-fighting, or other "amusements," caused a great number of persons to be assembled, our sharpers never failed to be among them. On this fifteenth of July, they had sat down to play together, because it so happened that no company had attended the gambling-house on that evening. It is said, "there is honour among thieves;" but there was not any between these two swindlers, for Montague, by slipping loaded dice down his

sleeve, and dexterously hiding the proper pair, contrived to cheat his *friend* Jones out of three hundred pounds. Jones's rage was terrible; the more so, from the quietness with which he concealed it; no outward sign warned Montague of the deadly vengeance that was within, so that his white cheek, and leaden coloured lips, and the tremor of his cold fingers, passed unheeded. Jones knew himself to be a better player than his companion; before they began, he had examined the dice; he felt confident that Montague had cheated him; though he could not discover by what means; his money too, excepting a few pounds, was all gone; for gamblers are never rich; they may be worth fifty thousand pounds one week, and be beggars the next. There was one circumstance, however, that to Jones was more galling than even the loss of his money—and that was the look of triumph on Montague's face. It was *such* a look, that the duped wretch could endure it no longer; he arose hastily from his chair, and muttering an oath as he left the room, swore he would win back his money, or murder the man whose dexterity had obtained it!

These two worthless men, before they commenced their game, had arranged that they should start together the next morning for Doncaster races; and as they always travelled in the plainest manner, in order to avoid being suspected, they had agreed to go as far as Cambridge by coach, and trust to chance conveyances for the remainder of their journey.

As they had now parted in enmity, this scheme was of course given up; but Jones had not gone the length of two streets before he became cool enough to recollect the plan which they had formed, and to form one of his own, which was this:—He resolved to disguise himself, to watch his friend's movements, and to be guided by circumstances when and how to revenge himself. For this purpose, late as it was, after ten at night, he went to a perfumer's, and bought a bottle of liquid, which is used to turn the colour of hair. His own was very light, and he considered that such an alteration would be made in his appearance, when his bushy hair and large whiskers should become jet black, that but little further disguise would be needed. He was always pale,

however, and he thought that a pair of red cheeks would be no bad addition to his face : so a packet of rouge was added. Then he purchased a great coat, and a hat, of a common sort, and each of a different form from any that he had ever worn. The next morning he was up, and prowling about the neighbourhood in which Montague resided, that he might observe whether he quitted his lodgings, and so trace him wherever he might go. With the feelings of a demon, Jones soon saw his victim run down the steps of the house, drawing on a new pair of gloves ; he followed him, and observed that he entered a Cambridge coach ; being thus sure of him for that day, Jones boldly mounted the roof, and away they started. During the journey, the two travellers saw each other as perfect strangers, for the disguise which that “ bold bad man ” had assumed, was complete. Once, indeed, when they stopped to change horses, Montague, looking out of the window, and humming an air, saw a grey, cruel eye leering on him from under a coarse hat, and he felt a little uneasy : but why, he could not tell. The eye, too, seemed familiar to him, though where he could

have seen the man, with such coloured eyes, and black hair, he could not recollect ; but he sang no more : those horrid eyes appeared to haunt him all the day ; and every time the coach stopped afterwards, he looked out eagerly to catch another view of this strange man. Jones, however, was too wary to trust himself in his victim's sight afterwards. At Cambridge, Montague again saw the man with the strange eyes, sitting in the tap-room of the inn at which the coach stopped ; so he immediately ordered a post chaise, resolving to cross the country, and get into the other great north road, in order to avoid his late travelling companion.

Jones now began to suspect that he was discovered—so (having first heard from the post-boy that he was ordered to drive the gentleman to Paxton) he left the coach inn, took a chaise from another posting house, and arrived at the “Golden Lion,” in the village of Paxton, about ten minutes after Montague. Here Jones kept entirely out of his sight ; he staid in the bar, and took his tea with the landlady, Mrs. Nipper, whose favour he soon won, by the pleasant manners

which he artfully assumed, in order to gain intelligence of Montague's movements. While they were chatting and sipping their tea, they heard a young voice coming up the inn-yard, singing

“ I've been roaming, I've been roaming,
Where the honeysuckle's sweet ;
And I'm coming, and I'm coming,
With *lots of dust* upon my feet.”

“ You are, indeed !” exclaimed the landlady, “ you young jackanapes !—where's yer manners ? —do wipe yer shoes, *do* ;—and, here, take this duster, and flack the dust off on um ;—out by the scraper !—not in doors. Lod ! what a state the tables and things will be in with that cloud o' dust !”

Our hero, Stephen, for it was indeed he, whom we left entering this very village, singing so merrily,—did as he was ordered to do, by this very commanding landlady. Mrs. Nipper was, indeed, in the civilized village of Paxton, as absolute a sovereign as poor Selkirk is said to have been in his desolate island. She too could have said,

“ I am monarch of all I come nigh,
My reign there is no one disputes ;
From my husband, all round to the sty,
I command all the men, fowl, and brutes !”

Poor Cowper ! how his mild feelings would have been shocked, if he could have seen his beautiful lines so used. However, it was the case. Mrs. Nipper was the cleanest, neatest, crossiest, and most bustling of landladies ;—clean, neat, cross, and bustling to a fault ! Whether or not she was aware of her *over* excellence, and so felt that when they happened to have a hogshead of bad ale on tap, their customers fell off, cannot be known ; but very certain it is, that she made little “ Mr. Nip,” (as she called her good-tempered husband,) “ brew good, sound, wholesome beer,” so that, in general, her house was full, and always quiet, excepting where she herself happened to be.

When Stephen came into the bar again, he had ceased singing ; and felt, in spite of himself, a perfect awe of the portly dame, who sat pouring out the tea,—her lace frill set out round her short throat, like a *chevaux de frise*,—and her red roses quivering in her smart cap ; so he very quietly seated himself in the window, till some waiter or chambermaid should come in. A well timed compliment from Jones on the butter (which Mrs. N. had made herself,) here put her in a good humour

again ; so she turned to Stephen ; and seeing with one keen glance, that he might sit at her table, without hurting her dignity, she said, “ You’ve walked a long way, my lad, hav’n’t you ? ”

“ Yes, Ma’am, I have ; and I’m tired ; and should like a little tea, when you can be so good as to order me some.”

This modest reply quite won Mrs. Nipper, who said, very kindly,—“ Come, young man, bring a chair ; you shall have your tea with this gentleman and me ; we’ve but just begun.”

Thus encouraged, our hero drew near the cheerful little party ; and did ample justice to Mrs. N.’s home-baked bread, and fine fresh butter. When the meal was finished, the shrill tongue of the hostess (which generally served the purpose of a bell) called to Jenny to “ take away,” adding, as she left the room, “ Now I’ll go and see about the beds ; I’m always very particular about my beds ; they are slept in every night : for I hold it a sin and a shame for any inn to have damp beds, giving people their deaths, as I say.”

Jones started up, and followed her out of the room, saying, “ with her leave he would see his

bed-room." She could not refuse: so they went up stairs.

"This, Sir," said she, "has two beds in it; you'll make no objections to let the lad as *tea'd* with us, sleep in the little bed; for we have only this other room, next door, which I shall want for the gentleman in the dining-room."

Jones looked hastily in, and saw that it had but one bed in it; he also observed that the "double-bedded room" had no fire-place, nor any opening for one in the chimney; so he said, "Certainly, certainly, I could make no possible objection to the youth sleeping in my room; but I noticed that there is no chimney in *this* room, and I am liable to violent attacks of my breath if I do not sleep with plenty of air; summer and winter I lie with the windows wide open, and the chimney board down: so I will take the single bedded room; and I dare say the gentleman in the dining-room, will have no objection to the lad's company; particularly if you tell him that *I would* willingly sleep in this room, except for the reason which I have given."

"Yes, Sir; no to be sure, Sir; very true, Sir;

it shall be so, Sir ; and I'll run down this very minute, and hear what the gentleman says about it ;" and off she bustled.

As soon as Jones had lost sight of her, he went into the room with the two beds in it, and examined the lock of the door ; he found that it had no bolt, but that it would lock with ease.

" This will never do," thought the villain : " I must hamper it" (*i. e.* prevent it from locking), " or my plot will never succeed !" In a moment, he had taken a letter out of his pocket, and had torn a piece off from it ; this he twisted up, and thrust sideways into the key-hole in such a manner that it could not be seen, but would entirely prevent the key from turning in the lock.

" Now he's in my power !" said the wretch, as he went down stairs.

" Well, Sir, it's all settled !—the gentleman makes no objections, and so this young man is to sleep in No. 3 :—Do you hear ?" turning to Stephen ; " you can go to bed as soon as you like ; and mind you behave yourself, and don't disturb the gentleman."

" No, Ma'am :—but I want to be off early in

the morning—so, if you please, I'll pay for my tea and bed now ; because perhaps you won't be up."

" Oh, no fear of that ; I'm a notable body—and am early about ; I call them all up every morning :

‘ Early to bed and early to rise,
Is the way to be healthy, wealthy, and wise ;’

says the old saw" (*i. e.* a saying, or proverb) ; " however, you may pay me to-night if you will ; I shall be in the bar again, before you go to bed I dare say ;"—and off she bustled. Jones had sat listening to every word, and when Mrs. Nipper was gone, he said to Stephen, with a kind and smiling manner—

" Really you seem to be a very steady, noble lad, to be walking alone about the country ;—do you live far from this place ?"

" Yes, Sir, in London."

" Indeed ! and so do I :—I think I've seen you there !"

" Perhaps you may, Sir ; I live in Bishopsgate-street ; and you may have bought shoes of my father, you know."

“To be sure ;—and so you are going out for a holiday to—”

“To see my uncle at York, Sir.”

“At York ! that’s a long way for you to walk ; I’m going that way to-morrow ; perhaps I shall overtake you on the road, and if I do I’ll give you a ride. A very well grown lad, indeed !” added he, half aloud. “Well, good night. It’s a fine evening ; I shall walk out and stretch my legs a little. I say, don’t you get into the wrong bed to-night ; you know the small bed is for you.”

“What a kind gentleman !” thought poor Stephen. “Now I’ll try and make out some more poetry, like ‘I’ve been roaming ;’” (he meant a parody upon it) ; “that one line took me near a mile before I could hit upon ‘lots of dust.’ Let me see—how did I make it out ?—Oh—ay—

‘I’ve been roaming, I’ve been roaming,
All day long in such a heat,
And I’m coming,’ ” —————

“Coming, Sir—coming !—Jenny ! don’t you hear the gentleman in the dining-room ringing like mad ?” and in flounced Mrs. Nipper, with

aired sheets on one arm, and a waiter of glasses in the other hand. Something had disturbed her temper again ; so Stephen begged to know if he might pay his bill and go to bed.

“ Yes, if you like, boy ;—I’d need have as many heads as caps, I am sure ; calling here, and ringing there—Nip a drinking like a fish with them Cambridge chay boys in the kitchen ; and that fool Jenny a running every way but the right !—There—that’s right ; two and sixpence ;—that’s the sum ;—thank ye, my lad, and good night.”

Stephen was sound asleep in the “ little bed ” by half past nine o’clock, and the next morning by half past four, he had left the village of Paxton far behind him, and was again busy with his poetry, which would not rhyme to his mind at all. By eight o’clock he had reached another village, where he had a comfortable breakfast, and then set forward again. He had not proceeded above a mile, when he heard footsteps behind him, and turning round, he saw a number of men, women, and children, coming towards him. All their eyes seemed fixed upon him, and they quickened their pace as soon as he looked round. Two stout

men, who had constable's staves in their hands, now sprang upon him, and told him that he was their prisoner.

"I? Oh no, there is a mistake! I have done nothing to deserve being sent to prison, I'm sure," said Stephen, quietly.

"It will be well if you find it so, my lad!—You're safe now, however; you've swift heels of your own, I know that; why, what a dance you have led us surely!—I'm as hot as a steam-boiler!" And in spite of the poor boy's prayers, tears, and protestations of innocence, they hurried him back again. The constables would say nothing; but from many in the crowd, he learned that he was taken up on suspicion of having murdered a gentleman, who slept in the same room with him at Paxton; and then had absconded (*i. e.* run off) with his watch and purse, both of which the landlady had seen the gentleman use, during the evening; and neither of which could be found in the morning, when the murder was discovered. Poor Stephen's horror and astonishment may be imagined when he heard this dreadful accusation against himself! In a few

minutes, however, his face brightened up, as he said, "Well, my innocence of the theft will soon be seen, for here's my bundle; you can look that over; and here are my pockets," turning them all inside out, when a pencil-case, a key, two or three halfpence, his own red purse, his pocket handkerchief, a hack knife, and a coil of twine, went scattering in all directions out of his trembling fingers. "Now search my bundle!"

"No, no," replied one of the constables, "time enough for that when you get before a magistrate."

"But you *shall* look!" said he, snatching his blue kerchief from the man who had seized it; then, kneeling down, he untied the knots, and turned the things all out on the ground. Nothing was found; when one of the boys near him took up a brown-paper parcel, tied round. "Ah, that's a pair of shoes; but I'll open them," said the unfortunate boy. He did so, and to his own dismay, and the satisfaction of the people, out fell an embossed russia leather purse, and a splendid watch, chain, and seals, one having a crest, with the initials G. M. (Gaston Montague) upon it;

and the other the same crest, with "*veritas*" under that.

Stephen had looked so very innocent, that many in the crowd thought him so ; but at this proof of his guilt, as they considered it, they set up a shout that quite overpowered the wretched prisoner : he put his hands to his ears, and fell back on the ground. Some water from a neighbouring stream revived him, and he was led, or rather borne, along to the little inn where he had breakfasted. A chaise was ordered, and he was taken to the county town, and on being examined, the evidence was found to be so strong against him, that he was committed to prison to take his trial.

During all this time, Stephen could hardly be said to be in his senses. Many persons in court thought him sulky ; some, that he was guilty ; a few supposed that he was out of his mind ; and one of the constables felt almost confident that he was innocent. To this person, whose name was Chubb, the poor boy was given up, that he might be conveyed to prison ; and, as they went along, the kind-hearted man tried all in his power to rouse the

attention of his prisoner, and induce him to talk ; but he could not succeed ; the youth sat in the chaise, looking at nothing, with his hands hanging down, and his mouth half open, like an idiot. " Poor lad !" said the constable, at last ; " if he is guilty, then I never saw innocence—that's all !—It's my belief that he will go quite beside himself (that is, mad), if they should not happen to attend to him ; I'm sure he ought to be bled." They now stopped at a large handsome building, the county jail, and when Mr. Ward, the jailer, came out to receive the youth, Chubb said, " If I were you, Mr. Ward, I'd send to the doctor who attends the jail ; for I think the poor boy should be bled ; his senses seem gone ; I'll never believe he is guilty, if all the judges and juries in the kingdom should condemn him."

" Poor fellow ! No, Mr. Chubb, nor I neither," exclaimed Mrs. Ward, the jailer's wife, who had also come to the gate. " Here, husband, let me speak to him ; I'm sure I shall be able to make him take notice, and cheer up." So saying, she went to the chaise door, and letting down the steps, she took his arm, and helped him out, saying, " So, so !

—don't you be down-hearted !—you come with me; and we'll write a letter together to your mother : you have a mother, hav' n't you ?” .

“ My mother ! Oh, my poor, dear mother ! Ah, yes ! yes !—and she will never live, after the shame of knowing that I am put in prison ; didn't some one say, that I was going to jail ?—I going to jail !” exclaimed Stephen, bursting into a passion of tears.

“ Ah, he'll do now,” said Chubb—“ let him cry, Mrs. Ward ! These women have *such* a way with them !—here have I been trying all that I could think of, and couldn't rouse him ; and yet your wife, with the very first words she speaks to him, sets him a crying, and brings him to his senses, as I may say.”

“ It's very true, Chubb, she is a worthy soul, though I say it ; and—”

“ Why, who should say it if you don't, Mr. Ward ?” said Chubb, laughing. “ Well,” added he, “ I'll come and see how he goes on to-morrow. Good day !—Between you and me,” added he, going up close to the worthy jailer, and seizing his coat collar, to draw him closer—“ between you

and me, I believe yonder busy fellow at Paxton, with the grey eyes, and piebald-looking whiskers, knows more about the murder than this chick : I have my suspicions ; and if they lose sight of him, they're fools for their pains, that's all !" So saying, he stepped into the chaise, and was driven off.

Ward and his wife, as well as our kind-hearted constable, had been too long accustomed to see the hardened features of guilty beings, for them to feel any doubt of our hero's innocence. They did not fear that he would be condemned for the murder, because they had, on so many occasions, seen in how beautiful a manner the justice of our country is administered, and how cautious our judges and juries are in condemning any one, unless the crime can be proved to have been committed by the person who is suspected of having broken the laws. They both resolved, therefore, to cheer the poor lad's spirits, and to treat him with all the indulgence in their power. If they had dared to let him escape, they would not have done it ; because they were experienced enough to know, that such a step would appear to be the

effect of his guilt; and that it would prejudice every one against him. Meantime he was taken into an upper room, that had a high grated window in it, opening towards the yard, where the prisoners took exercise. Mrs. Ward soon brought him some supper, for it was now eight o'clock; also pen, ink and paper: then sitting down opposite to him, she said, "Come now, do try and eat a bit of this nice roast mutton; it will strengthen you, and we can talk about your father and mother, and your sister Sarah, that you told me of;—twelve years old I think you said she was; just the age of my Betsy? Now a bit of mashed potatoe—that's right: you'll see them all three here the day after to-morrow, you may depend on it; and then you'll be so happy, and all will go right. Come, come, don't lay down your knife and fork and cry so!—you have had nothing these ten hours; you are as weak as water, and won't have strength to tell me your story."

"Oh, Mrs. Ward," exclaimed poor Stephen, and then sobbed again, "how good you are to me! but you forget that if my parents and sister come, they can't prove that I am innocent of

that dreadful—shocking——. Oh dear ! oh dear ! that ever I should be taken up for —— Why, I never saw the poor gentleman ! I had plenty of money of my own ; and my father promised me that he would buy me a silver watch next Christmas, if he got in some of his bad debts ; so, you know, what could I want with any body's purse and watch ?”

“ To be sure : I know that you did not want, and that you did not take the watch ; and if you would but eat a bit, you'd have strength and spirits enough to believe that every body else will soon be of my way of thinking. There, that's right ; now a draught of home brewed beer. I'll just run down with the things, and see if the baby wants me, and be up again in a minute to hear your story ;” so saying, the benevolent creature hastened away. She soon returned, listened to his little tale, and after pouring comfort, like the good Samaritan, into the poor boy's heart, she left him for the night. As soon as Stephen found himself alone, in darkness and in solitude, all his fears came upon him with added force. He knew that it was impossible for him to prove that he had not

done the wicked deed ; and he knew too little of his country's laws to feel any hope that they would not hang him upon *circumstantial evidence*.*

In half an hour, he had so agitated himself with the horrors and terrors of being accused of murder, and of being hanged, that he could scarcely keep himself from dashing his head against the wall : he wrung his hands, sobbed, and groaned, flung himself on the homely bed, called on his mother, and, in short, appeared as if he were quite out of his mind. Suddenly he started up—" Oh ! if I could but escape !" exclaimed he, and darting towards the high window, through which the moon beams entered, he leaped up with all his strength in order to reach the bars, but in vain ; then he ran to his bedstead and to the table, to try if he could bring either of them under the window to aid him ; but alas ! they were both fixed to the floor ! He now became desperate, and walked about in perfect agony at his disappointment. He felt in

* Which means that every circumstance connected with the crime appears to be made clear, except the *positive proof* of it.

his pockets over and over again for his knife, his favourite "bread and cheese knife," (that knife which Sarah used to joke him about and call his idol ; and what boy from eight to fourteen years of age, is without such a one ?) but that old friend was gone ; he had lost it in the morning, when he was being conveyed to prison. Just at this moment his foot kicked against something ; he stooped to find it, and picked up a fork, which Mrs. Ward had dropped when she went down stairs the first time, and which she had forgotten to look for when she returned. Our poor hero ran with it to the wall under the window, and finding a wide crack between the stones, about three feet from the ground, he inserted the prongs, and the stone being of a soft sandy nature, crumbled fast away from the fork, which Stephen worked round and round, until he opened a space wide enough for him to push his friendly instrument into the hole as far as the handle. He had now a stepping place ; and after many, many trials, he at length managed to spring up with one foot on this handle, and, at the same time, to catch one of the iron bars in his hand. He did so ; but the next instant

down he came, with a heavy fall, on the floor, bringing the rusty bar with him. He had hurt his head and his elbows, but he cared little for his bruises, in his joy at finding the window bar in his hand. The noise that his fall had made, however, he feared would bring the jailer or his wife up stairs; so he drew the fork out of the hole, put it near the table, and laid himself down on his bed, with his *precious bar* under him. He had scarcely done so, when one of the turnkeys unlocked the door, and came in with a candle, which he brought near to Stephen's closed eyes.

"Why the boy is fast asleep! Missis is always a fancying some noise or another; I told her; and so did master, that she were mistaken; but, according to custom, I was to come and see."

He looked round the room carelessly, and went out, locking the door safely after him. Poor Stephen started up directly, rejoicing in his escape; and instantly proceeded with his work. Again, with great labour, he raised himself on his fork handle; and now finding that he must proceed cautiously, he used his exertion so dexterously, that he soon stood looking out upon the deep blue

sky : he shook the remaining bars, and found only one of them loose, but that was too tight for him to move ; and he perceived that the space from which the rusty bar had fallen was too small for him to creep through.

It may appear improbable that in a well regulated county jail, any thing so remiss and romantic as a rusty window bar should be found ; but it was the case, nevertheless. Mr. Ward had discovered it himself on that very morning, and had sent to the blacksmith to forge a new one ; the man had measured the window, had forged the bar, and it would have been put in, just before Stephen arrived at the gaol, had not the plumber, who was always employed to solder the bars into the stone, been out at work, at five miles distance. If the prisoner had been a man, and a person of bad character, he would not have been put into this room, but would have shared one, with another of the felons ; but Stephen being a mere boy, and evidently unused to bad company, Mr. Ward kindly and judiciously kept him from mingling with the other prisoners, and as the jail was full, excepting this room, he

was brought into it. The window was at so great a height from the floor, that it was not supposed possible the rusted iron could be discovered ;— and thus the matter is explained.

Holding by a bar, at the window, with one hand, and leaning his chest on the deep sloping wall, for support, Stephen worked for above half an hour, at the socket of the loose bar. He found that the jagged end of the rusty piece of iron, served admirably to chip away the lead and stone ; and with a feeling of joy, which those only who have been in peril can understand, he succeeded at length in wrenching out the stubborn iron. Before he descended, he thought he had better try if the space were wide enough to admit of his passing through it ; so he pushed his head and shoulders out, and looked down into the yard. His brain turned giddy, as he strove to peer amidst the uncertain lights and shadows, which a low summer moon caused among the buildings. He endeavoured also to guess the height of his window from the ground, as well as to ascertain what was immediately underneath it ; but a projecting leaden pipe that

ran along the building, prevented him from seeing as he wished. Our hero now came down from the window; and pulling the blankets, sheets, and coverlet from off the bed, he drew them into the lightest part of the chamber, and seating himself on the floor, he began to tear them into long wide strips, which he knotted together as fast as he could rend them off. As he had no other instrument than the iron bars, it may be supposed that this was a work of exceeding difficulty; and such he found it. Indeed, so little are we aware of our powers, that we seldom know the extent of our strength, contrivance, and endurance, unless some great and unforeseen circumstance should draw them forth; and then, as was the case with Stephen, we can scarcely believe the evidences of our capabilities. When he had finished this laborious work, he fastened the rusty piece of iron to one end of the strips of bedding; and mounting once more on to his fork step, (which had now become so loosened in the hole it had gulled, that it would scarcely support his weight,) he fastened the *whole bar*, on to the other end of his "escape ladder," then

leaning out of the window, he cautiously lowered it, over the water pipe, and listened eagerly, hoping he should hear the bar strike the ground. —No !—he heard no noise whatever ! This was a little disheartening ; for he had no means of knowing how far short of the gravelled yard it was hanging : but Stephen's mind was now “ bent up ” to undertake the dangerous enterprise, and he resolved to venture. The rusty iron, being the shorter of the two pieces, was to remain above ; so after placing it across, between two of the window bars that still remained fixed, this adventurous boy pushed himself through the opening at the moment that he heard the fork give way and fall on the floor of the room. He was now in a situation of exceeding peril : the bedding might snap, or the rusty bar might turn round and slip through ; in either case he would be dashed to death in the fall ! The youth now, however, reached the leaden pipe—rested on it with his feet, to take breath—looked down—saw nothing but a black dreary abyss—seized his tackle with fresh resolution, and again began his descent. A window now glared in the moonbeams, close to

him; being ungrated, it was doubtless, he considered, belonging to that part of the house which was inhabited by the jailor's family! When this alarming thought occurred to him, he turned sick with terror at the narrow escape he had had of being discovered, "For," thought he, "suppose my bar had been swung, by the wind, against the window!" He would not suffer himself, however, to let his fears get the better of him; so keeping himself steady, lest he too might touch the glass, he again slipped down from knot to knot: "Heavens! I hear talking in the room!" said he to himself, "perhaps the jailer is now watching me!" He listened—a baby cried!—then Mrs. Ward's voice soothed it; and again Stephen descended. At last his feet reached the iron, at the bottom of his curious ladder; he stooped, caught it in his hands, and dropped from it, but still holding the bar. He did not yet touch the ground; but the jerk which he was obliged to give, weakened a part of the blanket, that had all the while been grating and rubbing against an iron clamp, which supported the water pipe; he felt it stretching,—it snapped,—and down he dropped! Fortunately, his fall

was broken by a wide bank of turf, which Mr. Ward had allowed the prisoners to erect, that they might sit down to rest themselves. Noise enough, however, had been made, to have aroused the jailer ; but the baby was still crying, and thus was Stephen's fall unheard. He was now, it is true, outside of the jail ; but he was yet a prisoner within the dreary, high walls of the yard ; and, for a moment, he wished himself back again in his room, as he looked around him in despair. His eyes now wandered along the top of the walls, that were bristled with iron spikes, fixed in every direction, and a sudden thought flashed across him ; he snatched up his bar, and his tackle, and flew with the speed of a bird, across the space, to the gateway, whose white freestone pillars gleamed ghastly in the moonlight, while the fetters and chains which were carved upon them, shewed dismally. Stephen hoped to find a hole, a chink, or a projection in the stone work, or in the gate, in which he could fix his bar, that it might serve for a step, (as his fork had already befriended him) but nothing appeared of the kind : the door itself was of an amazing strength and thickness,

“Stubborn’d with iron, cramp’d and screw’d!”

and he turned from it in an agony of sorrow, and disappointment. He stood for a minute with his hands clasped over his forehead, struggling against the sickening fear of being found there the next morning; when he started,—uttered a suppressed shriek,—cried out, “What a fool I was not to think of this before?”—then snatching up his bar, and holding the other end of the knotted bedclothes in his left hand, he flung the iron over the top of the wall; and finding that it fortunately hitched among the *chevaux de frise*, he climbed up, from knot to knot, and soon arrived among the spikes! His spirits were now almost overcome! To find himself so near being out of the dreadful building—the open country lying before him—his toil, danger, and great exertions so well rewarded—were such agitating circumstances, that he felt as if all his strength were leaving him. The almost fainting boy now clung among the spikes with one hand, while his trembling fingers adjusted the bar, so that he might descend on the outside of the wall;—he drew up his ladder, dropped it over, and once more recovering his firmness, he

hastened down, scudded across the high road, and bounded over a wide ditch into a low meadow, where some sheep were quietly lying, huddled together. The unusual interruption, and rapid motions of our hero, alarmed the timid creatures ; in an instant, they were all in motion ; and the noise of their bells terrified Stephen, even more than he had frightened them ; for he of course concluded this horrid clanking would lead to his detection, should any one by chance have discovered his flight. He therefore ceased running, and turning back to look at them, he saw that he had committed an error, which would be far more likely to lead to a discovery of his route, than the noise of the sheep bells ; and that was, that he had left a long dark pathway over the grass, where his footsteps had brushed off the dew. The moon shone on the field, and made it look like a sheet of silver ; so that his track upon it appeared as if it was inlaid with a line of ebony ! In a moment, he bethought himself of turning round, running in various directions about the field, on purpose to mislead his pursuers. This he did—and at the further side of the meadow, perceived

two well beaten paths, one of which appeared to lead to a village, and the other into a thickly wooded country. He chose the latter; and after running for above an hour, occasionally resting to take breath, he came to the skirts of a copse wood, just as the "dawn began to pale the morning star." His flagging footsteps could scarcely support him up the steep bank, which bordered the wood;—and with still greater difficulty could he, with his exhausted strength, and weakened limbs, ascend a thickly branched oak that he selected for his resting and his hiding place during the coming day. Here poor Stephen had leisure to think over the terrible events of the last twenty-four hours, and to reflect upon the course which he ought to pursue. While he watched the reddening east, and saw the sun rise lurid and angry through the trees—foretelling stormy weather—he was trying to persuade himself that he must be in a frightful dream, so suddenly had he been snatched from his happy walk, to be taken up as a thief and a murderer! "Ah, what will my poor mother say, when she hears of it?" exclaimed he, as the tears streamed over his wan face. "Then, what will

she do, when she finds that I have escaped from prison? Where can she look for me, and how shall I get to her? If I beg my way to London, I shall surely be discovered, and be taken back to jail; besides, my father is so severe, that I dare not go near him, while I am looked upon as a murderer! What was the use of leaving the prison, since I don't know where to go? My uncle!—Oh no! I dare not go to him neither, now! Still it is better to die starved to death in this wood, than to bring disgrace on my honest parents, by being—hanged! Oh God! good, kind God! to whom I have been taught to pray, thou knowest I am innocent of this great crime! let not such a dreadful death—Oh! what shall I do?—what shall I do?—How often I have heard of men being hanged, and how little have I thought of the agony and misery that they must have felt, before they came to that horrible moment when they were to die! I have never thought of death before:—and if it seems so shocking to me now that I am innocent, what must it be to guilty persons?" Here Stephen wept again, but with more calmness; he felt that his tears relieved his over

excited spirits, and that he could think of his present situation, and of his future prospects, with less of despair. "Perhaps," said he to himself, "if I could get across to the coast of Norfolk, I might be able to escape on board of some vessel, and go over to Holland, till the pursuit after me be over; or till the real murderer be found! Aye;—that will be the best plan! Let me see;—I remember, in the great map of England, which hung in Mr. Wallis's shop, that I measured the distance from London to York; and the shopman shewed me how to do it, by the scale of miles; and I noticed where Cambridge was; and from there across to the sea, was not much above sixty miles. I should soon walk *that*, I'm sure; then, when I get to Holland, or somewhere, I can write to my mother, and tell her all about my being taken up—for—" Here the danger and sorrow of his present situation again forcibly struck him; and once more was his young heart nearly broken, as he burst into another flood of grief!—Poor fellow! Let him not be condemned as cowardly and childish; his situation was an awful one to a youthful and an innocent mind! His frame, too, was weak-

ened by toil, anxiety, and want of sleep during the past night ! When youth is deprived of its natural rest, kind nature always seizes the first opportunity in which the body is tranquil, in order to make up for the lost sleep. And thus it was with Stephen : his very sorrow helped to soothe him ; he had wisely bound himself to one of the branches nearest to him, with his bright amber-coloured silk handkerchief, that his sister Sarah had bought and hemmed for him, and slipped into his pocket at parting : and while he was yet marking out his route, as nearly as he could, (for he recollected that he must steer his course to the north-east,) his eyes gradually closed, his head leaned on the bough which propped up his shoulder, and, in half a minute,

“ Kind Nature’s sweet restorer, balmy Sleep,”

had eased his harassed spirits of their load of care.

Sound and sweet had been the rest of our poor hero, for nearly five hours, when he was suddenly startled from it by voices, and by the noise of the bushes and underwood near him being beaten with sticks. In an instant he was roused out of a

happy dream, to the danger of his situation ; and his heart fluttered and beat, as if it would have burst from its confinement, for he saw two men, whom he well remembered, and heard them say, as they made their way towards the very tree in which he lay,

“ Well, neighbour Chubb ! ”

“ Yes, this is hot work, Mr. Tracey ! ”

“ Come then, suppose we sit down here in the shade, and take a snack of beef and bread—my wife would put me some up in a cloth, and cram it into my pocket ; ‘ for,’ says she, ‘ that there little hardened sinner will lead you a fine dance, you may take your bible oath ;—who but he ?—that’s a cunning un, I’d be bound—to think of them contrivances of his—such a boy, too ! why, they say he’s but fourteen years old ;—that he should be able to make his escape out of our jail, as never had such a thing happen to it before ! ’ and it was a wonderful thing for such a child to do,” continued Tracey, “ now warn’t it, Mr. Chubb ? ”

“ Poor little fellow ! it was, indeed. I hope he didn’t do himself a mischief ; he couldn’t though, or he would have been found before this time.

I'm sure my head swam as I looked out of his window, and saw the great height he ventured to go down !”

“ Ah, it would have saved his hanging, if he had broken his little rascally neck !” replied Tracey.

“ Well, neighbour,” said Stephen's friend Chubb, “ you and I shall never agree, I find, about the boy. I'm sure we've talked enough of him, since we come out ; but I will repeat, that he has the most innocent look with him, I ever saw ; and besides, if he'd been guilty, do you think we should have found him in the very high road that he told the man at the ‘ Golden Lion,’ (i. e. Jones) he was going to travel next day ?”

“ Aye, aye ! so you've said before, neighbour ; but he is deep enough, he had some reason for it, I'm sure ;—besides, do you make me believe that he would have wished to escape, if he had not known himself to be guilty ? he must have been certain sure that if he did not murder the gentleman, he would not be hung for it.”

“ Ah, there you're wrong, Tracey ! you forget what a young boy he is. How could he know

that people are not hung now-a-days, but upon the plainest evidence?"

"It's no use talking, neighbour Chubb, I tell you ; —if you have finished your snack, we'll be moving. Indeed, I shall first climb this tree, for since we've been sitting here, a thought has come over me, that the young villain is as likely to be hid *in* a tree as *under* one. So, do you hold my hat, will ye, and give us a heave? I shall soon reach that lower branch."

"Ha! ha! ha! Well, that would be a sight worth a 'Jew's eye,' to see Mat Tracey climbing a tree! Why, Mat, you hav'n't done such a lively thing as that, these five and thirty years, when you and I used to play truant and go a bird's nesting together!—Come along, do. Ha! ha! ha! I can't help laughing to think of your fat sides climbing a tree! why, a sack of flour will be next fancying itself nimble! Let's go right away for Royston—come!" and a faint laugh reached the terrified boy, as the two constables took another direction, and left him to recover from his fright.

As soon as they were out of sight and hear-

ing, Stephen climbed the tree, till he reached the slight boughs at the top; and looking out all around, to see the nature of the country near him, and to ascertain if any more pursuers were in search of him, he found that the wood appeared of great extent; but that towards the north-east, as nearly as he could guess by the height of the sun, the wood was not above a mile over. He saw his late visitors, too, trudging away, down a green avenue, in a contrary direction. Finding that his way was clear from interruption, he thought his best plan would be to hasten on that he might get still further from the scene of his late terrors; so he came down the tree, and having wrenched a stout hazel stick from the underwood, (he had no knife, to cut it!) he scrambled along, through the thick masses of bush, and shrub, long grass, and brambles, till he reached the opposite skirts of the wood. It was now afternoon, and the faint and exhausted boy longed for food, but longed in vain. He had eaten only once in six and thirty hours; and where to look for any more meals, he could not tell. Before him was a wide,

flat country, consisting of corn and pasture land, with large farms scattered here and there. Near the wood, was a potatoe plot, a turnip field, and a large meadow, in which cows were grazing. "If I had but a fire," thought Stephen, "I could roast myself a few potatoes; but alas! I cannot make a fire! There are neither blackberries nor nuts ripe yet; and so what am I to do?" He now heard a whistling on the other side of a high hedge; so, quickly withdrawing himself into the shelter of the wood, he quietly climbed a tree, that he might look over into the field, and see who caused the noise. The field was lying fallow, i. e. it had no crop upon it; and the weeds had been hoed up, and were raked together in heaps; these heaps a farmer's boy was then setting light to, with a candle and lantern, that they might burn or rather smoulder all night. Here was a fortunate discovery for poor Stephen! He now waited very patiently till after dark; and sat pleasing himself with thinking of the pleasure it would be to roast his own potatoes. What boy would not envy him this part of his adventure? Is there one of my

young readers, of the masculine gender, who has never yet known the delight of making a bonfire, collecting fuel to feed it with, blowing it till he is giddy, and then roasting potatoes in its ashes, till they are done to a cinder on one side? If there be such a happy person, I can only say, I envy him the pleasure which he has yet to come! But to return to poor Stephen, who, amidst his anxieties and sorrow, felt almost happy, while he anticipated such a supper, so prepared, — the night closed in; the air was still and sultry; the stifling smoke rolled low over the field, and hung among the trees of the wood, like a smothering fog; the sun had gone down pale, and sickly, very unlike the angry glow which he had shewn at his fierce uprising; a leaden coloured mist spread itself all over the sky; and deep thick clouds, with jagged edges, lowered in the south and west. The boy, who “whistled as he went, for want of thought,” had gone off towards a farm, with his lantern swinging on his hard fingers, when Stephen, venturing into the potatoe field, drew up three or four roots, and hastened to the nearest heap of weeds:

the mould was rubbed from his homely dainties with some couch* grass, and above twenty fine potatoes were quickly done ! Nearly a dozen were devoured, skins and all, by our ravenous hero, before his hunger was satisfied, and then he became thirsty. He had not seen any water during the day ; and could think of no expedient by which he might satisfy his new want, except that of milking one of the cows, in the next field. He, being a Londoner, had seen but little of rural life ; the art of milking, however, he had once tried, while visiting a great cow-keeper, near Islington : so that, though awkward, he thought he might perhaps succeed ; but first, he picked up his remaining potatoes, and filled his pockets with them, to serve as a meal the next day ; for he considered, that he might not again find potatoe fields, and burning weeds, so near together. Thus loaded, he groped his way to the meadow, and was guided to the ruminating cattle, by the sweet smell of their

* Quitch, or "squitch" grass, as it is sometimes pronounced. It is the farmer's torment, its long, tough roots running a yard deep into the soil.

breath ; but here a new difficulty presented itself ; he had no vessel into which he could milk the delicious beverage ; he soon, however, recollected, having noticed a large hollow turnip, near his fire ; which the whistling boy had perhaps scooped out, for his amusement, and then flung away ; so, he went back again, and after a search in the dark, he fortunately found it ; and returned to the cows. As he drew near to one of them, a sharp flash of lightning startled them both ; the cow was young and wild : so she scrambled up and galloped off, with her tail set straight out. Another creature, older, and more quiet, suffered Stephen to approach her, and finding him gentle to her, she let him fill his turnip with her milk. A second flash, a crashing peal of thunder, and a sluicing shower, now sent poor Stephen to seek shelter, but his hatless head was streaming with rain, before he could reach the wood. In scrambling up the bank, his foot slipped, and he fell into the dry ditch at the bottom ; and while he lay here, wondering if he was hurt, another flash shewed him a deep hole in the bank, large enough to contain a cow :

and into this hole he gladly crept for protection from the drenching storm. He was soon asleep, in spite of the noise around him; and he awoke to a clear, cheerful sky, a bracing air, and such a brightness all about him, from the refreshing rain, that his young heart was cheered. He started on his feet; and shaking the yellow sand of his resting place from off his clothes, he thought, (as well as Captain Andrews,*) that no bedroom is so delightful as the clear open air of Heaven in the early dawn of a fine summer's morning.

Stephen, judging by the time that the sun rose, found he could walk for two or three hours before the farming men would be stirring: for in that thinly inhabited district, so far from a high road, he did not fear to meet any other travellers; so he seized his stick, and struck across fields and meadows for several miles; then, as the heat of the day became oppressive, and a village was in sight, he sat down under shelter of a tree, and ate of his potatoes, slaking his thirst at a clear spring. As the forlorn wanderer had no hat, he was fearful of attracting notice, by walking with-

* Vide Captain Andrews's Journey in South America.

out one, so he was obliged to be continually on the watch to see if any one was coming, and many times he skulked down to avoid being seen by a distant passenger. As the evening came on, he once more set forward with a heavy heart, and walked till he was completely tired. Towards sunrise he went into a cow-shed to sleep, and was nearly discovered by a shrill voiced milkmaid, who soon afterwards came into the field, from a farm-house near it, to call the cows to be milked.

He had just time to run out and hide himself behind the building, before she entered it ; in the mean time, Stephen leaped over a hedge and scudded off. Again he walked till the heat overcame him, and again he stopped to rest. He lay down in one of the furrows of a field of wheat, and pulled the green tops that grew all around him, sucking their tender ears that were half filled with a soft, creamy substance, in the vain hope of obtaining sufficient nourishment to satisfy the cravings of hunger, which had now become painful. As the sun declined, he heard childish voices across the field, behind a hedge. "Surely," thought he, "I have nothing to fear from little children ; I will

go and peep through the hedge and speak to them!" He crawled on his hands and knees along the furrow, and saw, through a gap in the fence, three little girls at play in an orchard, close to a farm house, which had been hitherto concealed by the trees from his sight. Each of the children had a slice of bread and butter in its hand. What a sight for our poor hungry wanderer! As he stood considering what to say, so as not to frighten the children, the eldest of them, who was about eight years of age, ran towards the hedge to pick up her ball, when she saw Stephen.

"Little girl," said he, "do you like this pretty thing?" drawing a gold pin, set with turquoises, from the front of his shirt.

"Yes, I do," replied she.

"Well, if you'll promise not to shew it to any one for three days, and will give me your piece of bread and butter, you shall have it," replied he, holding out his hand eagerly for the tempting slice.

"Oh, yes, and if you are so hungry, I dare

say Peggy and Susan will let you have their's ; for mother will give them some more."

" Thank you, kind little creature !—but don't let them see me ; and pray do not tell any one that you have spoken to me—will you ?"

" Why, who are you ?" said the child, staring hard at him.

" True, true, I fancied every body must know me !" exclaimed Stephen—" I mean, do not say any thing about me, dear—good evening," said he, running off with his three slices, as soon as he had given her the pin. She stood looking at him in childish wonder, when her mother's harsh voice called " Becky !" from the farm door.

" Yes, mother !" said she, running along, and hiding her pretty pin, inside of her frock body.

" Take a basket, Beck, and carry them eggs down to Mrs. Mince."

" Yes, mother," replied the child, but she stood still.

" Why don't you go ?—do but see what a sight you've made of yourself ! Why, you've torn your sleeve ! What do you stick pins in your frock for ? let me pull it out to pin up the hole with.

Why, what's this?—where did you get such a grand pin from? Why don't you speak, you little dumb toad?"

"He bid me not tell for three days."

"Who? what?—speak, if you don't, I'll take the broomstick to you."

Becky sobbed, and tried to keep her word to Stephen; but the warning of a *broomstick* was not to be slighted, so she reluctantly told the whole story; her mother thought it strange, but soon forgot it. Presently her husband returned from taking a load of corn, to a large town at some miles distant.

"Look here, Rachel!" said he, shewing her a handbill; "here's twenty guineas reward offered any one, who will deliver into Mr. Ward's hands a lad named Stephen Bancroft, who escaped from jail two nights ago—'he is about fourteen years old,' said the farmer, continuing to read aloud; 'had on a blue suit of clothes, black silk handkerchief round his neck, a gold pin set with t-u-r, tur, (spelling the word,) q-u-o-i-s-e-s'—with *what*?'—"

"A gold pin!—a boy!—had he a hat?—was

his hair light?" asked the woman hastily. "Yes, I know it says, further down the handbill, something of that kind; yes, here it is—'*without a hat!*' Oh it's he! the boy that gave Beck this pin!"

"Why you don't say so! how long ago? and where?—I'll saddle old Bob, and be off after him! twenty guineas is not to be caught every day; you shall have a new gown, Rachel, out of the money."

"Aye, and Miss Hemmings shall make it, and then Nelly Turnstile won't look quite so proud upon me as she does now, when she goes by to chapel, in her three flounces, and full sleeves!" said Mrs. Rachel Peck to herself, as her husband rode out of the yard full gallop. "If he don't meet Becky," continued she, "to ask her which way this boy is gone, he'll never catch him, and then I know I sha'n't have my new gown this side Whitsuntide!" and Rachel sighed at the too probable escape of Stephen Bancroft! In ten minutes time, Roger Peck, in his straw hat, and with his wide skirted coat flapping like the sails of a windmill, came lumbering along on his stiff-

jointed old cart-horse, that looked absolutely frightened at his own unusual speed. Tearing, and banging, and galloping, and stumbling, on they came, down a deep rutted green lane, passing our hero, who was stooping quietly to drink at a little pool, close to a gate, that opened from the lane into a field. He looked up as our vigorous farmer and his wondering horse flew by ; but he little suspected, poor fellow, how near he was being made a prisoner again. Fortunately, however, he was ignorant of this new pursuit ; and he continued on his way with renewed strength and spirits. But it is needless to follow him day by day, and night after night, through his harassing journey ; we must therefore consider him to have nearly arrived at the sea side. Sometimes he was half famishing, and then he was obliged to beg for food ; but his terror of being known was so great, that he ventured as seldom as possible near to any habitation : indeed his fears were just, for one morning, as he passed near a village, within ten miles of the coast of Norfolk, he was shocked and terrified to see the words Stephen Bancroft, in great black letters, on an old barn. He staid

to read the whole of the handbill ; then burst into tears, and hurried on. To find that, after all his toil, which had now lasted more than a fortnight, he was no safer from discovery than when he left the jail, was certainly enough to overcome his youthful spirits, and to injure a frame which had been so exposed to peril and anxiety, had undergone so much fatigue, and had been so weakened by hunger, and by a scanty supply of food. The poor boy too soon found this to be the case. That cruel handbill seemed to have destroyed all sense of feeling within him : for when he caught the first view of the sea, (that object which he had so ardently longed to behold,) instead of the thrill of delight which he had expected to feel, he looked at it, from the little hill which he had ascended, with a hot and lifeless eye, as if it had been a mere cloud. He leaned against a tree, full in the glory of the morning sun, that was rising over the calm waters of the German Ocean ; and felt no joy, no wonder, no gratitude, no fear, no hope ! His legs ached, and trembled ; his head throbbed ; a sickness and a chill stole over him ; and he seemed as if he should like to lie

down and die, with that strange dream-like vision spread out before him. He had never till now beheld the sea; and being feverish and ill, its mighty presence seemed to overwhelm him. A passing recollection, however, of his dangerous situation,—he being full in sight of any one who might be passing,—once more made him exert his little remaining strength; and he crept slowly and wearily down to the beach, on which he sank, just at the moment that a fisherman was bringing some tackle to his sturdy vessel, that was lying ready trimmed for her voyage.

“ Oh, take me with you, Sir !” said poor Stephen, as the man passed near him.

“ You ! why, who are you ? where do you come from ? where do you want to go ?” said the fisherman, stopping, and looking at Stephen with surprise. But the poor boy could not answer him.

“ No, father, don't take him ; you promised that I should go soon ; and I'm sure I could handle a rope, and shift a sail, better than he could,” exclaimed little Willy Swale.

His father paid no attention to him, but, after looking at Stephen for a minute or two, he called

out to his wife, who was coming down the beach, bidding her make haste. He went to meet her : “ Dora,” said he, “ here’s a poor young chap, to my thinking, very ill indeed. He wants to go on board with me ; but that must be because he’s not sound in his upper works,” (i. e. not in his senses.) “ As sure as we are standing here, the lad has broke away from his friends, and is out of his mind, like. Do you and Willy take him home with you, and nurse him as well as you can ; you’ll be sure to hear something about him soon, and depend on it you will be well paid ; indeed if you ar’n’t, ’twill be no great matter out of our way.”

“ Lod ! but if he should die, Jem !” exclaimed Dora.

“ Pooh ; pooh, he’ll not do that, then ;—so come now, there’s a dear girl ;—I can’t stay to help you, I shall lose the tide if I do ;—I hope I shall be home again in a week or so.”

The honest fellow heartily kissed his wife, and in ten minutes had pushed his stout vessel into the glass-like sea. Dora, in the mean time, was endeavouring to rouse the wretched Stephen, and trying to persuade him to get up and walk : but he did

not stir. So calling Willy, who was watching his father manœuvring the boat, they heaved him up between them, and supported him to their hut. Here he was undressed and laid on Willy's little homely bed,—the first that Stephen's aching limbs had pressed for nearly three weeks. Dora then warmed him a little oatmeal and water, which he eagerly drank ; and sinking down on his pillow, he was soon in a heavy dose.

While he slept, Dora sent Willy to a spring, about half a mile off, for a large pitcher of cold fresh water ; “ for,” said she, “ I dare say he'll drink like a fish, as you did, Willy, when you was in the fever last spring. I were feared for my life to give you any water, 'till Doctor Jacobs said you might have as much as you liked. And, now I think of it, there's two bottles of stuff, as you was to have took ; I dare say they will do the poor lad good ;” and she went to their little cupboard and reached them down ; one was of a dark brown colour.

“ Ah, I remember that nasty stuff, mother !” exclaimed Willy ; “ and I know that Dr. Jacobs called it a ‘ black draught ;’ I liked the other sort of stuff best, and I recollect that it was sweetish,

and after I took it I fell asleep ; and when I awoke I was all over so wet like, that I thought you had been flinging warm water over me ; and the next day I was well !”

“ I remember it, Willy ; and I'll give these bottles of stuff to the sick lad.”


In half an hour's time, Stephen had taken the “ *black draught*,” and was again in a disturbed sleep. At night Dora gave him the other medicine, and setting more water by his bed-side, she and her son went to rest. By sun-rise, the next morning, Stephen awoke from a refreshing sleep, with his senses clear, and his frame free from fever, which had happily been checked by the judicious treatment of Dora. At first our poor boy had but a very confused recollection of any thing that had occurred : he seemed to remember a boat and a vast sheet of water that looked like grey glass ; and he rather thought he must have gone in this boat, across the sea, to Holland : he looked up, as the beautiful sun shone out from above the waves, into his little bed-room ; and certainly, nothing that he saw in it, induced him to change his opinion. He had, of course,

never been withinside a fisherman's hut before, and everything was so strange to him, that he might easily have been deceived; "besides," he thought, "it was only a little while ago—yesterday morning, I believe, that I saw the hand-bill; so who would take pity on me in England?—Oh no! —I must be on the continent, and I am safe."

This reflection was so soothing, that it acted like another *febrifuge* (i. e. a medicine to allay fever), and he again fell into a sleep, which lasted till noon. His kind nurse had been into his room several times during the morning, and was rejoiced to find that he was so well; his calm breathing, and soft, cool, skin, proved that he was so. "Poor fellow! how hungry he will be, just as Willy was, I warrant! I'll cut him some bread and cheese, and make him some thick gruel, against he wakes, and then I shall hear all about him. I wish Willy would come back. Why he has been above three hours gone to Ingram," (which was the nearest village to their solitary dwelling). All this Dora uttered aloud, as she stood looking out of window in Stephen's room; her voice awoke him, and his heart began to

flutter when he heard her speaking English, he was then sure that he had not crossed the water. Willy, too, being gone so long, was a terrifying circumstance to him who had for such a length of time been accustomed to notice every trifle that was connected with his perilous situation. Dora now left the room, concluding that her patient still slept; the instant she was gone, Stephen got up, dressed himself hastily, and stole down the crazy stairs. All was still. He crept into the lower room, looked round, saw no one, and heard nothing, except the "wabbling" of the saucepan of potatoes on the fire. Upon a little, clean, oak table, stood a tin "porringer," (or small mug), empty, by its side a large "hunk" of bread and cheese, and a piece of bacon. He looked out of the window, and saw Dora going over a field to meet Willy; so, finding he had no time to lose, he snatched up the bread and cheese and bacon, poured out and drank the gruel, which was standing on the "hob," and turned to leave the house. Suddenly, the ingratitude of his conduct to the kind woman who had so tenderly nursed him, struck a pang to his heart. "Yet what can I

do?" thought he. "I would write and thank her, but I have neither pencil, ink, nor paper." Just then the piece of wood, which was used for a poker, fell out of the fire. Stephen picked it up, and scrawling on the table with its black end, these words, "Thank you for your kindness to me, I shall never forget you!" he darted out of the house, and ran down towards the beach as fast as his trembling limbs would take him. The shore thereabouts winds very much, forming small bays and headlands; the cliffs are low, and in great storms large portions of them are frequently washed down; but during the short tides, and in calm weather, the water does not reach the cliffs. Along this rugged and broken coast, Stephen ran for about half a mile, when his further progress was stopped by vast masses that had been dislodged by the fury of a storm which had taken place some months before. These masses extended so far out, that the tide, which was now flowing, had reached the further end of the ruinous looking fragments, and was running up and playing over them, with the beautiful ripple and innocent trifling that is so delightful to look at. Long,



brown, leathery looking weeds had attached themselves to the crags and nobs, upon which Stephen now scrambled, and he stood watching their heaving and elegant motion, as the buoyant waters ran in among them, lifted them up, and sunk away again—again advanced, and again retired, as if in playful wantonness; or, as the poet Keats so exquisitely expressed it—

“The patient weeds unshent by foam,
Feel all about their undulating home.”

Stephen's delight at the sea, (one of the most glorious sights in the creation,) which was spread out before him, and playing at his feet, may well be imagined, but cannot very well be described. He was recovered from his recent attack of illness, and his sound sleep, his wholesome food, and the newness of his situation, all conspired to give him a feeling of happiness, that sometimes will cross even the woe-worn pathway of maturer age; for our frequent disappointments, and familiar acquaintance with sorrow, make it a matter of wonder, when its blissful presence is about *us*. By the time that our hero had finished his enormous breakfast, he recollected that he had for-

gotten to save any of it for a future meal, and with *this* remembrance, came that of the danger of his situation. He was still in England; Willy was, doubtless, the bearer of the intelligence contained in the handbill—there was no chance of escape by sea, “and what chance is there by land?” added he, as he turned from the grand expanse of waters; feeling more wretched, from the contrast to his late unusual sensation of happiness. He climbed among the ruins, towards the cliff, wondering if he should be able to find a gap or open space, in which he might hide himself; and having once admitted the hope of such a thing, he searched about with anxiety and care.

About half way up the rugged face of the low cliff itself, (which he had reached by clambering all along the fallen masses,) he came to a flat space, on which he could stand and even walk a few paces with ease, and on moving round a projecting point, he found an opening large enough to admit of his lying concealed and sheltered from the weather. With what joy and delight did he fling himself down in it, crying—“Oh, here I can live for a year, undiscovered!” and here

he sat for the remainder of the day, never weary of watching the lights and shadows on the mighty world of waves, the distant vessels of all sizes, and the increased bustle and force of the tide as it arose, and dashed and hissed among the broken craggs below him. As the evening came on, and the deep shade of the cliffs was flung on the dark sea, Stephen ventured down on to the beach, which the tide was now leaving again. He had thought much of his situation, during the afternoon, and had resolved to search for food by night, when he would be less liable to be discovered than in the day-light. Towards the cottage of Dora Swale he now took his way; the moon was young again, and her bright crescent hung like a fairy lamp among the silvery stars, to light his steps. All the world seemed at peace, all but the anxious wanderer, whose youth and innocence entitled him to a better fate than that of being an outcast from his fellow creatures; gaining his few scanty meals by stealth and stratagem; watching, with terror, every shape that shewed indistinctly in the moonlight; and starting at his own shadow, like a guilty thing. How

many times, during his melancholy wanderings, had our poor hero thought with joy and gratitude of his innocence, and with pity on the guilty ; “for,” he would say, “if I am so wretched, what pangs must they suffer, poor creatures !”

At last he reached the hut ; no light, no voice, no sound from within, came to his listening ears. He drew nearer, and saw Dora’s kettle standing outside the cottage, ready for Willy to fill in the morning. He softly tried the latch of the door, it yielded—he entered—a check shirt was lying on a chair ; Dora had been at work on it for her absent husband ; on a low stool lay hooks, lines, string, and other implements for fishing, on which little Willy had been trying his skill. A tinder-box, matches, two or three flints, a steel, and an old gunstock, lay all together ; these last, with one of the flints, a bit of tinder, and some matches, Stephen immediately put into his pocket. His hunger sorely tempted him to go to the cupboard and take some food, but his honesty restrained him ; “these things,” said he to himself, (meaning the flint, &c.,) “are not

wanted, and I may as well have them as not ; but the poor creatures work hard for their food, and I'll not rob them while I can try any plan to procure it for myself. I think Willy would give me a hook and a bit of string, if he knew, or if I dared tell him, that I want to try to fish with them." So he took a hook and a few yards of the twine. He longed to leave some recompense in return for these things, but he had nothing excepting his clothes. He looked at the table, and found that his writing yet remained, though there was too little light for him to see to read the words ; he wished to add a few more words of gratitude to them, with a promise to repay and reward Dora's kindness, if he ever should be able ; but prudence conquered his anxiety, and he left the house.

On the outside stood a stack of wood ; from this Stephen took a small bundle, and finding some straw in an old pigstye, he made free with some of that too ; then snatching up Dora's kettle, he ran off with his treasures to the beach. He had noticed in the afternoon, that some fine lobsters and crabs were crawling and flapping about in the hol-

lows of the fallen cliff, which the tide had left full of water ; so having made a fire on the beach, he put four blocks of rock round it, and on the top of them he placed the kettle, which he first filled with sea water. While it was heating, he went to one of the lobster pools, and, by the light of the setting moon, he saw two or three noble black fellows moving about. He dared not touch them in that dim light, lest they should bite him ; so taking two sticks, he held one in each hand, passing the other ends under the lobsters, and heaved them out, one after the other, on to the beach ; and as soon as the water boiled, he dropped them into it. In twenty minutes, as near as he could guess, they were done. Meanwhile Stephen had found a crab, which he also boiled ; and now he saw that his fire had burned out. So leaving his fishes where he could find them when he should return, he ran back to Swale's hut with the iron pot, which he replaced at the door, and once more retraced his steps to the cavern, where he slept soundly till dawn.

A joyous lark, springing from its nest, just above our solitary boy, awoke him to all the

beauty of the coming day. Out he sprang, and began to make his way up the face of the cliff, in a zig-zag direction, from one rough step to another, then from a dangerous mass to a jutting crag, hoping to reach the summit; but the "shaling" surface became perpendicular, like a wall; so he was obliged to scramble down to the beach. After walking some distance, he found a rough path, that wound up the cliff, and toiling up it, he soon stood on the top, and looked around him. Not a living creature was in sight, except that merry lark, which, mounting higher and higher, and still singing his song of morning ecstasy, seemed trying to inspire the youth with some of the happiness which flowed in that blessed melody from its downy breast. A field of wheat, extending to the edge of the cliff, had been nearly cut, and was tied up in sheaves, that drooped and waved in the morning breeze. Stephen looked at them for a minute, as if he were debating some matter with himself, and then exclaimed, "Surely I have as good a right to a few ears as the mice and sparrows have!" So saying, he drew out an armful, bound it round, and laid it ready to carry home:

then running into the next field where he saw potatoes growing, he drew up a few of the roots ; and the dead wood in a neighbouring hedge afforded him fuel for his fire at night. Thus loaded, he descended by the same passage to the beach, and scrambled again to his cavern home. In this manner poor Stephen lived, and thus he wore away another fortnight.

But we must now leave him, and go back to Paxton, to see what has taken place at the "Golden Lion," where Mrs. Nipper, the *lioness*, ruled absolute.

On that fatal night, the memorable sixteenth of July, about ten o'clock, Montague rang the dining-room bell—ordered his bill—paid it—desired that his portmanteau should be taken up to his bedroom ; gave directions that he should be called at six o'clock in the morning—bespoke a chaise for that hour—and went into his chamber, where Stephen had already been long asleep. Montague tried to lock the door ; but found he could not turn the key. So, considering that the boy might wish to get up early, and that he would perhaps disturb him by unlocking it, he gave up

the attempt, and decided not to call the landlady to have it examined, as he at first intended. He set his portmanteau on a chair, put his beautiful watch under the pillow, and was soon in bed and asleep.

Jones, in the mean time, was sitting up, and chatting most agreeably, with Mrs. Nipper, "to while away the time," as he told her, until Montague should retire for the night; but in reality, he staid that he might watch the motions of his victim, and make more sure of him. At length, Jones wished the landlady good night, and retired to his own room;—and here it is dreadful to follow him; but we will not dwell on the horrid picture, of a cruel man, thirsting for the blood of a fellow creature; a revengeful man, planning the death of a brother gambler, for having succeeded in doing *that*, which it would have been his own highest glory and delight to have performed himself; a cowardly man, who dared not do the terrible deed, openly, and brave the consequences; but plotted the destruction of an innocent lad, by making him appear to be the murderer!

Jones had bought a penknife in London on the preceding evening, and had purposely chosen one with a peculiarly long, sharp, slender blade ; this he now opened, tried its keen edge, and laid it ready. Several times he had been to his door, which was left ajar, in order that he might listen if the noises of the house had ceased. Several times (with the impatience of a tiger waiting for its prey) he had stood at Montague's door, longing to hear the hard breathing of two sleepers ; at length he distinctly ascertained that they both slept. He cautiously entered, and stood for an instant to listen if either of them moved. No ; the deep breathing of innocence, and of helplessness, were on each side of him ; and yet that fearful man flinched not from his wicked resolution ; but killed the unfortunate Montague with his penknife, and placed it under Stephen's bed. The wretch looked for a moment, to see if "his murdered man" stirred, but finding him quite dead, he proceeded to secure the property, which, as he expected, was contained in the portmanteau. With a greedy joy, which none but such a heart as his could feel, he seized a pocket

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book, filled with property, in notes, to a large amount, a very elegant and valuable snuff-box, set with diamonds, and one or two other articles of jewellery, such as a diamond pin and ring all of which he had often envied his companion the possession. The cold hearted villain, after covering up the body, actually went to the pillow, and searched for a watch which he heard ticking; he found, and drew it from under the head of the corpse! Then lifting up the clothes that Montague had worn, Jones took out his purse from one of the pockets; and going softly round to poor Stephen's bundle, he hastily, but carefully, wrapped them both within a pair of shoes; then leaving this scene of death, he returned to his own room!—Did he sleep?

The next morning at six o'clock, Jenny went, (as Montague had ordered over night,) and knocked at his door. No answer! "Sir, 'tis six o'clock." No reply! "Please, Sir, it's after six!" Not a word from within the chamber! "Lord bless the gentleman, how he sleeps; and that cled of a boy too; I'll go in and shake *him* well, however!" So she opened the door, and

went into that quiet room ! The piercing shriek which almost immediately followed, brought every one belonging to the house into the chamber ; and the scene that took place on the general discovery of the murder it would be impossible to describe ! Jones contrived to come out of his room, just as the crowd of persons appeared on the top of the stairs ; and his well feigned sleepiness and astonishment, deceived every one. He was the first to ask where " the boy " was ? He wondered if the gentleman had been robbed as well as murdered ! He suggested that a constable should be sent for ; that the house might be searched, as well as every person in it ; " and therefore," added this artful man, " the lad who slept here, should be looked for ; not that I think the poor little fellow has had any hand in this dreadful business, but justice requires that he should be examined as well as the rest of us." " Little Nip " stood as if he were bereft of his senses, Mrs. Nipper was crying and sobbing over the " scandal that had been brought upon her house ;" the girl Jenny was in fits, the ostler, postilions, and others, were too terrified

to think, or say, or do, any thing ; all therefore devolved on Jones, who ordered one here, and another there, in a way that speedily set matters in a right train. The knife was found under Stephen's bed, the boy was brought back, the watch and purse were identified (*i. e.* proved to be the same) by the landlady, a coroner's inquest* was held, and appearances were so strong against Stephen, that the verdict was brought in "killed by a stab from a knife, *supposed* to have been inflicted by the youth Stephen Bencroft," &c. &c. and poor Stephen was ordered to jail, to take his trial for the murder. Jones waited with apparent tranquillity and innocence, until the inquest had sat, lest he too should be pursued and brought back, if he had betrayed any haste to depart ; but he was in fact exceedingly uneasy. People began to talk, and wonder, and surmise ; they said the boy looked innocent, although they allowed that his escape from prison had a suspicious appearance ; they said, that the inquest

* A coroner's inquest is an examination which is always held by a chief called a coroner, and twelve other men, in all cases of violent death, in order to find out the cause of it, and detect the persons who have committed the deed.

had been hastily managed ; that the maker of the knife should have been summoned, as it was so very curious a one, and had perhaps been bought at the shop of the maker, (for the name and address were stamped on the blade,) it might have been identified, and the person who bought it might have been remarked and recognised. Stephen's father and mother came down to Paxton, too ; and their grief and respectability won many opinions in favour of their son, of whom they spoke so highly !

Jones had left his bottle of liquid in London, having applied it but once to his hair and whiskers, not supposing he should have any occasion to disguise himself for more than a day or two ; so that the roots of his whiskers began to look white and patchy, or "*piebald*," as Chubb had vulgarly, but expressively, called them. He could procure no more of the liquid in the village of Paxton, nor would he have dared to buy any, if he could ; neither did he choose to send for another supply of it, lest by some unfortunate chance it should be known that he made use of any art to give a color to his hair, eyebrows,

and whiskers. All this alarmed the guilty wretch ; and he longed most earnestly to be off without exciting any suspicion by too much haste. He had not given his real name or address at the inquest ; but called himself Mr. Simson, a West-Indian, just arrived, and travelling from London to Edinburgh ; and as no suspicion had attached itself to him, his word was taken.

“ Well, Mrs. Nipper,” said the monster, on the day after the inquest had been held, and Montague was buried, “ well, Mrs. Nipper, as I find that this sad business is over, I shall leave you to-morrow morning ; indeed, my friends in the north have been expecting me all this time, but I was willing to see how things would be settled, or I should have been off before.”

“ Sad business ! yes, it is indeed a sad business, Sir, for me and my house ! I’m sure I don’t think I shall get over it, the longest day I have to live ! To-morrow morning, Sir ?—very well, Sir ; I hope, Sir, you’ll say a good word for the ‘ Golden Lion,’ and I hope you have found your commendations such as you can speak well of,” &c.

Jones was anxious to make, and to keep friends with every one; he therefore praised Mrs. Nipper's 'commendations' and attention, promised to recommend the "Golden Lion" to all his friends, and once more bidding the delighted landlady good night, he borrowed a needle and thread of her, to mend his braces, as he said, and, for the last time, went up to his bed room. The night was dark, the moon had grown old, and no longer cheered the hours of rest, Jones therefore needed a candle, that he might see to mend his braces, as he had pretended, but in reality, to open the lining of his waistcoat, and fasten inside of it the notes which he had stolen from the portmanteau. The guilty man, however, was too fearful of discovery, to attempt this business until all the inmates of the house were at rest; so placing his candle behind the chimney board, lest the light from it should betray him, he waited nearly an hour: by that time all noises had ceased: then going cautiously to the open fire-place, or rather chimney, (for it had never contained a grate,) he got inside, and holding the candle high in the chimney, he reached up, and took down his ill-

gotten wealth from one of the holes in the brick-work, that had been left for the sweeps to place their feet in when the chimney should require to be swept. Jones had put the packet in this secure spot, on the night of the murder, and had never seen it since. He now proceeded to count his treasures, and to sew the notes in his waistcoat; the ring he fastened inside the crown of his hat; the diamond pin was stuck out of sight in the back folds of his neckerchief; and the snuff box he was obliged to put into his pocket. The pocket-book he was afraid to keep; for besides that it contained many memoranda, and accounts of gambling debts, written by Montague in ink, it had his name stamped in gold letters inside of the leather fold. He studied for a minute, and then decreed to place the empty book in the same nook whence he had just taken it. This dangerous affair being finished, Jones put out his candle, and went to bed, dreading to look at himself the next morning in the glass, because of the changed color of his whiskers, which every hour became more apparent. When he arose, he adopted the plan of tying up his face, pretend-

ing he had a violent toothache ; for he found the pale hue of his stained hair, even worse than he feared it would be. No one however appeared to notice it ; he paid his account, ordered a chaise to Huntingdon, and amid the bows and courtseys of the whole assembled force of the " Golden Lion," he drove off, in a state of triumphant feeling, that bordered on happiness. The fresh sullen mound of earth in the dreary churchyard even—the last home of the murdered Montague—assisted this wicked triumph ; and his eyes lighted up with the joy of a demon, as he felt himself whirled past that lowly, quiet grave, in all the proud security of successful villainy ! From Huntingdon, he struck across the country to Yarmouth, got on board a packet just going to sail for the Hague, in Holland ; arrived in high spirits at that beautiful town, and immediately commenced living in a splendid style, under the name of Mr. Hardington. He frequented the public places, and pushed himself into respectable society, without immediately attempting to follow his old trade of gaming, as he wished to be considered a gentleman of large fortune ; an opinion

which would throw persons off their guard, and place them more within his power.

One day he was sitting, elegantly dressed, in a coffee-room, and talking to a few gentlemen whom he used occasionally to meet there, when a fine young man in black entered the room, and soon joined in the general conversation, during which, he mentioned that he had just arrived from Utrecht, on his way to England, and that a packet was now waiting for a fair wind, in which he intended to cross over to Yarmouth. There was an anxiety of manner about this young man, that drew the attention of the company to him; and Jones, among others who addressed him, offered him a pinch of snuff. The countenance of the stranger changed, as the richly embossed, antique box, was presented to him; a slight start, and a scrutinizing glance at Jones,—which that bad man felt, rather than saw,—made him a little uneasy; but the stranger soon relieved his feelings, by saying—“Sir, your snuff is worthy of your box.”

“The snuff, Sir, is considered very good, I believe; I bought it in Amsterdam, whence I

have not long since arrived;—the box is a family heirloom.”*

“So I should think,” replied the stranger; and they separated.

Jones soon afterwards left the coffee-room, followed by the young man in black, who traced the guilty wretch to his lodgings, made a few inquiries respecting him in the neighbourhood, and then went away.

The next morning, while Jones was dressing to go out, and hoping, that, as the wind had changed in the night, the stranger had sailed, he was informed that a gentleman wished to speak with him. “Say I am gone out,” said he to the servant.

“’Tis no use, Sir, here is the gentleman,” throwing open the door as he spoke, and displaying the handsome figure of the young man in black.

“Very extraordinary, upon my word! Why did you not shew the gentleman into another room,

* Heirloom—any thing which descends by inheritance, and cannot be parted with by the members of a family. In fact, a family relic.

Sloman?" exclaimed Jones, with an unsteady voice, and a pale lip.

"My business is pressing, and must plead my apology for intruding on you, Mr. Hardington," replied the stranger, laying a peculiar emphasis on his assumed name, and advancing towards the terrified villain.

Jones rallied his sinking spirits, however, for, thought he, "what have I to fear? who knows me?—no one saw me do the——." "Well, Sir!" said he in a loud voice—so loud, that it made himself (not the stranger) start,—“well, Sir! you know my name; 'perhaps you will favour me with yours!"

"Montague, Sir! Ernest Montague; cousin to Gaston Montague, who was murdered, Sir!"

Jones dropped into a chair; so sudden, so awful was the tone of voice, and look of his visitor's flashing eyes. The villain soon recovered, however, saying, "Well, Mr. Ernest Montague! since that's your name, and pray what have I to do with you and your murdered cousin? You do not surely come here to insult a stranger without some good excuse; I suspect, however, that you

are some swindling rascal, and hope to frighten me into giving you money, in order to get rid of your presence ; I shall ring, and desire the people to turn you out of the room ——,” getting up and reaching the bell.

“ Stay, Sir, stay,” said Ernest, catching his arm ; “ I come to ask a favour, and a few questions, which had better, for both our sakes, be attended to while we are alone.”

“ A favour ! and pray what may that be ?” said Jones, in a milder tone of voice, willing to hope that he might have been alarmed without a cause.

“ It is, Sir,” replied Montague, “ that you will oblige me with a sight of the singular snuff-box which you kindly presented to me yesterday in the Imperial Coffee-house.”

“ A most wonderful request, truly, and as insolent as wonderful ! No, Sir ! I shall not favour you with a sight of it.”

“ Then I am sorry,” replied Montague, going towards the door, “ to be obliged to call up those who have accompanied me hither, by order of a

Burgomaster,* and who will force you to comply with my request."

"Stay!" exclaimed Jones; "for God's sake, stay! What can you mean? how can my snuff-box, which my mother gave me ——."

"Take your choice, Mr. Hardington; I *will* see the box! are you wise enough to allow of my looking at it quietly, or do you prefer witnesses? If I find that I have been too hasty, I will make every apology that a man of honour ought to offer, or any gentleman should require; knowing, as you know, the circumstances in which I stand: —my cousin murdered, and I, his only relative, on my way home, to bring his murderer to justice."

Jones found now that his wisest plan would have been, in the first instance, to comply with the gentleman's request; so, still clinging to hope, and again assuming an air of offended innocence, he said, as he drew the beautiful snuff-box from his pocket, "Your apologies must be such as you will not be ready to make, Mr. Montague,

* An officer somewhat like our magistrates or justices of peace.

for having taken so great a liberty with me and my affairs ; and I shall insist ——”

During this pompous speech, Ernest had touched a secret spring, well known to himself, and discovered, beyond a doubt, that the property belonged to his family ; that, in fact, it was his own, by right of inheritance, as he was heir to his cousin Gaston. He looked Jones steadily in the face, and said seriously,

“ Mr. Hardington, are you prepared to satisfy me of the way in which you became the owner of this box ? for, that it was in my cousin's possession three months ago, I am ready to make oath.”

“ I have already told you, Mr. Montague, that it was given me by my mother, that it is a family relic, and ——”

“ That may hardly be, Sir, for your family name is not Montague.”

“ And what has a name to do with the box at all ?” said Jones. At these words, Montague rushed to the door, called in two men, (whose office is of the same description as that of our constables) and pointing to Jones, they made him their pri-

soner, while he swore, and protested against the injustice of the action, in loud and tremendous language. He was taken off to prison however, there to stay until English police officers should arrive from London. Ernest had felt so sure of having found his cousin's murderer in the coffee-house, that he had sent off a full account of the whole affair to the magistrates of Bow-street, by the vessel in which he had intended to sail, and the wind becoming fair, she had cleared out in the night. All the property that could be found in Jones's lodgings, was secured, and retained by the burgomaster, to be sent over to England, when he and Ernest should cross the water, with the expected officers from Bow-street.

In a very few days, the miserable Jones was safely delivered into the custody of two of our English officers of justice, and Montague waited with impatience for an opportunity of crossing with them. No packet was to sail till the next day; and no promises of extra pay, could induce the owner of the vessel to leave Holland before the appointed time.

While Ernest was on the beach, trying in

vain to persuade the captain; a stout active fellow, a fisherman, hearing the conversation concerning these great offers that were made, said to Montague, touching his hat,

“I wish your honour, that I was in luck’s way; I am going to start for Yarmouth, at least for the coast near it; and if so be, you could put up with my commodations, I’ve a strong boat y’re honour,—though to be sure it’s but a fishing smack, and I could take you across with me, for I and another fisherman sail this tide.”

“My good friend, I would gladly go, but there are three others of my party, and we cannot be separated; your boat, I suppose, would not accommodate so many?”

“Bless ye’r honour’s heart! yes, and a round dozen more, if ’twere needed!”

“Well, I’ll speak to the others, and be back again to let you know, in the course of an hour.”

Montague then asked the officers if they had any objection to cross in an open boat, instead of the regular packet; he judiciously made it worth their while to oblige him, by giving them a handsome present; so having gained his point, it was

settled that they should take their prisoner on board immediately. This was done, and in a short time the murderer Jones was on his way back to that country which he had so lately left in triumphant guilt !

It is now necessary that we understand how it happened, that Ernest Montague should know so much of his cousin's affairs; this is easily explained. Gaston and Ernest had been attached friends while they were youths ; but the former, who was an orphan, having taken to bad company, during his cousin's absence on the continent, Ernest's father, who was also guardian to Gaston, had absolutely forbidden his son from associating with the headstrong youth, lest he too should become wild and dissipated.. Ernest was placed with a merchant, whose concerns called the young man frequently abroad ; which circumstance pleased his father, as it prevented the dangerous intimacy with his cousin from becoming too great.

Old Mr. Montague had been dead about a twelvemonth before the period at which the story commences. The two young men frequently cor-

responded, and strong hopes were sometimes felt, by Ernest, that Gaston would not continue long in his profligate way of life. On the sixteenth of July, during his journey from London to Cambridge, the erring young man had thought of his follies and vices with unusual regret, and made many resolutions to alter his conduct and give up his discreditable companions. He had often made such resolutions before, but Jones was always at hand, to make him break them, and to urge him on to fresh vices. Now he reflected, that as they had quarrelled, his old tempter would no longer have any control over him. Pleased with himself, he resolved to begin his good work, by restoring Jones the three hundred pounds, and desiring him never again to intrude himself on his intimacy. Gaston was alone in the Cambridge coach, when he made up his mind to perform this meritorious action; and was singing, with real lightness of spirit, when the coach stopped to change horses, and he saw a man leering upon him, with an expression in his eyes that struck him forcibly. This man, as has been before stated, was Jones. On his arrival at Paxton, in order to while away

the time during the evening, Gaston wrote the following letter to his cousin Ernest, whom he knew to be at Utrecht.

“ Paxton, Cambridgeshire, July 16th, 18—

“ DEAR ERNEST,

“ You are the only person in the world who cares a throw of a dice for me ! I know you to be a good fellow, and I never think of our boyish friendship and our present separation, without feeling that I am an unworthy scoundrel. Your father was right ; he kept us asunder, or I might have made you as worthless as I myself have been. I am on my way to ——— races, and have made up my mind never again to touch a dice box or a pack of cards, in the company of sharpers and professed gamblers.

“ ‘ Nay,’ you say, ‘ why go to the races, if your repentance be sincere ? ’ Why, Ernest, I am a greater villain than you suppose, or than I ought to confess to you ; but that, I hope by my frankness to make some amends, and to induce you to give me your friendship again. In a word, I cheated that wretch Jones, whom you have heard

me mention, and to whom I owe my ruin;— I cheated him in the most barefaced manner last night, and as I know he intends to be at ———, I wish to begin my reformation by giving him back his three hundred pounds. I hated myself, Ernest, while I was robbing the rascal; but that fierce spirit, that itching, that frenzy, which only a gambler can feel, urged me on! Mean and vile as I know this fellow to be, I have associated with him, and others like him, for above two years. I have actually called him friend, and suffered him to style me so too! and this “friend,” I heard last night, utter oaths and vows that he would be my destruction. That, however, I do not fear: I am no coward, and would face a dozen such ‘cream faced loons,’ as he is; but he is treacherous, and I cannot guard against concealed foes.—I have seen a fellow to-day, with a pair of grey eyes like his—pahaw!—what a fool I am. Ernest, I have been a disgrace to you, to our noble family, and to myself;—but if I live,—if I know my own heart, if,—but come and see, and judge for yourself,

whether I be worthy of credit, for I will not make professions.

“ If we are never to meet again, however, I may as well tell you, that my will is in the possession of my solicitor, Mr. Merelaw, of Lincoln's Inn. You are, (you have long known it,) my sole heir. Our grandfather's snuff-box, you will of course find named in his, in my father's, and in *my* will; I mention it now, merely to remind you, in case you should have forgotten the circumstance, that the secret spring which opens the false lid, is in the hinge. It was a strange whim of our grandfather to have the family arms and name placed within the lids!

“ What a wretched thing it is to dwell in the midst of persons who style themselves friends, and to feel not only that they are insincere, but that one does not deserve they should be otherwise! Yet this is the fate of all gamblers, my dear fellow, though every one may not feel the misery of it so keenly, as

“ Your erring,

“ But affectionate cousin,

“ GASTON MONTAGUE.”

When Montague, who sat writing at an open window, had finished this letter, he saw a little girl going by, and gave it to her to put in the post-office, and in a few days it arrived at Utrecht; but Ernest was from home at the time, and did not return for three weeks; so that on his arrival, he found not only Gaston's letter, but the English newspapers—which he used to receive every week,—in which his cousin's violent death was detailed. This sad intelligence exceedingly shocked poor Ernest; and he resolved to return to England immediately, in order, if possible, to trace the murderers, and bring them to justice; for the decision of the coroner's inquest by no means satisfied him, in consequence of the information respecting Jones, which his cousin's letter contained. The young man was on the road to the Hague in less than an hour. His unexpected encounter with Jones, in the coffee-room;—the snuff-box, which he had so often seen, and admired;—the “cream faced loon;”—“those grey eyes;” the confused look;—all these circumstances together, made him certain that he was that Jones whom his cousin had named, and that he ought to take the

advice of some person able to direct him. The rest is known. Our stout fishing-boat, in the meantime, scudded through the sparkling waters, in a dashing style. Jem Swale, "the captain," for it was indeed Dora's husband, who was on his way home, had agreed to land his passengers on the quay at Yarmouth. Ably did he guide his "Noble Triumph," (such was the grand name of the boat,) among the dangerous shoals, off the Norfolk coast, and beautifully did the bounding vessel obey the helm.

"Bill, I don't half like the look o' them clouds as blinds the pale sun!" said Swale to his companion, who had braced the sail with extra strength, and stood peering up at the mast head.

"They *do* look wildish, and spiteful, Jem; but if the wind keeps in this quarter, we shall run right into harbour in less than four hours, let the storm break ever so rough over us," replied Bill Clifton.

Ernest Montague heard these remarks, for he had noticed the threatening appearance of the clouds, and was on the watch; he had crossed the German Ocean too often, not to know something of the state of the weather. "I am but a land

lubber, Captain," said Montague, smiling; "but if I can lend a hand in the coming storm, I will with all my heart: I *do* just know a hawser from a main sheet!" The seaman laughed, thanked his honour, and said:

"If the gale should be too many for two on us, it won't boggle at upsetting three, or even all six. No, Sir, Bill and I's equal to manage the 'Noble Triumph':—though a south-easter just now, at spring tides, is likely to make us keep a sharp look out!—Bill, keep her head to!" Jones, the hardened villain Jones, sat well secured between the two Bow-street officers, a specimen of sullen misery: storm or calm appeared alike to him. The gale, meanwhile, increased; the sun was going down in a whitish haze; fierce clouds were sweeping over the full moon, that rose struggling, as it seemed, among the black masses; loud breakers on all sides, showed Montague the dangerous navigation of the "Yarmouth roads," in which they were now involved. The weather-beaten features of the seamen became more solemn, and their sentences were fewer, shorter, and confined entirely to the necessary directions for the

trimming of the boat, as the blustering headlong fury of the gale strained her well seasoned timbers. Harder and stronger came the gusts, fiercer and longer were her quivering struggles; every "rag" of canvas had long been reefed, and as long had she combatted the storm, under bare poles; for the brave fellows had been driven out of their latitude, and though they would not acknowledge it, even by a look to each other, they felt that they themselves, and their "Noble Triumph" were mastered by the giant spirit of the storm, which now ruled absolute, urging them on with relentless fury, among the banks and shoals, far away to the north of the port of Yarmouth. Guns of distress were flashing in all directions;—nay, the shrieks of a whole suffering crew came to them, with the mad fury of the blast,—adding to the horrors of this midnight scene. "Bill, we shall never weather the ruins of the cliff! Yon's Dora's light, not half a league a head—in another minute she'll strike! Edge her off, Jem!—there's a lull!—I tell you we shall—we *have* weathered the fall of the cliff, and are in smooth water!—nay—see, the wind's eye is cleared! we must beat about here

for an hour or two, and I'll lay my life to an anchor stock, we shall get into Yarmouth by sunrise!" Montague became eased of his natural fears for their safety, when he heard Bill Clifton speak thus positively respecting it. He was standing with his arm round the mast, to keep himself steady, when he suddenly exclaimed:

"Look! look!—some one is in the water!—Don't you see a body floating near us?"

"Some feller-cretur, as has tasted salt water for the last time!" said Bill, looking on the outspread limbs which the surges tossed. "Try and pick him up, Captain," urged Montague, "for he may not be dead!"

"It can't be done, y'er honour—the boat's gone clean beyond my management," replied Swale.

"I'll give you five pounds if you save the poor fellow, for I cannot think him dead; he must have been washed off shore, for no vessel is in sight."

"You keep to your offer, Sir, and I'll try for him," said Bill, hastily noosing a rope round his body; then bidding Montague hold fast the other end of it, and lend a hand to haul him aboard

again, he boldly flung himself into the raging surf, which he buffeted with noble strength and courage till he reached the body. "Haul away, my hearties!" said he, in a voice so nearly overpowered by the noise of the roaring elements, that those in the boat could scarcely hear it: however, they did "haul away"—and with great difficulty the exhausted Bill and his lifeless charge were drawn into the vessel.

It is time, however, for us to return to our forlorn young hero, Stephen Bancroft, whom we left dwelling in a hole of the crumbling cliff, like a sea mew in its rocky nest. Day after day he watched the clearing of the harvest; and he often sighed, as the voices of the gleaners were borne to him on the breeze as he sat in his solitude.

Many times he had peeped through the straggling grass and marine weeds, which grew above him, at the sun-burned faces of the children who sometimes came to look over the edge of the cliff, while they were shouting and playing in the stubble fields; and one day, he feared that his discovery was certain, for a hat came rolling down on to the shelf at the mouth of his cave:

no one ventured after it, however; and as he picked it up, his feelings were quite overcome. He thought with bitterness of his own destitute situation; for four weeks he had never had a hat on his head. In the course of that long time, he had spoken but twice to his fellow creatures. During that dreary period, he had felt all the alarms, though not the pangs, of guilt:—his rest had been broken, his nights had been devoted to labour, and his days, to restless slumbers and lonely sorrow!

“When shall I dare to leave this wretched cave and go among my fellow creatures again?” exclaimed the afflicted youth, clasping the hat in his hands and sobbing over it. “The boy who has lost this,” he continued, “is now perhaps in the greatest grief that he has ever known; while I—oh, what a fate mine is!—He, perhaps, has a happy home and kind parents;—aye, and so have I; but he will go home this evening to a hearty supper, and to sleep in peace; while my lot is to scramble among crags and slippery weeds, to obtain a scanty meal, for I am an exile from home! Home! oh, well may the song say,

‘There’s no place like home!’ I little thought when I left it so merrily on the fifteenth of last month, that I should ever feel to love it so very, very dearly, as I do now! My poor dear mother—and kind Sarah too! If they could see me, I am sure they would not know me!—Oh that I could but hear whether the murderer has been discovered!” Here he paused for a minute, then continued, “How am I to live in this place when the winter comes on? I shall be frozen to death! Horrible! or if not frozen, I shall be starved to death; for how am I to procure food—they have just cleared the last corn field within three miles of me. Aye, there’s the merry sound of the harvest home!—How chilly it is this evening!—How the wind has risen! What a dismal noise the sea-gulls make as they wheel about, and then seem blown away over land!—Dear me, I am more wretched this evening than I have felt ever since I found this cave!”

Stephen shuddered as the cold blast whistled among the tangled masses of his hair, and sent him crouching to the end of his bleak abode.

The tide was now running up,—long white

breakers in all directions, littered the wide expanse, which had hitherto glanced and glittered in uninterrupted gentleness and serenity. The gloomy east sent up its wild clouds, and their blackness gave a ghastly hue to the foaming waters beneath them. The very sea-mews even, that play in the surf, and dally with the blast, screamed at the frowning heavens, and yielded to the storm. On came the world of waves, boiling over the further part of the ruins of the cliff!—Faster! heavier! they climbed among the fragments, like huge monsters, with black, shapeless heads, and white shaggy manes; and as Stephen stood at the edge of his little home above them, he felt the spray wet his face, as the floundering masses of water, thus urged into uncouth shapes by the interruptions it met with, broke over the fragments, and dashed themselves to foam. That there was danger in the cave, had struck poor Stephen, and induced him to come forward. He had never till this night seen the shingle entirely covered by the water; but, to his terror, he now found the heavy breakers, booming and hissing against the foot of the cliffs, all along the coast on

either side, as far as he could see ! And still they poured on like an army, and more of the ruins became covered ;—and yet the waves swelled, and raged, and flung themselves higher and higher ; and rushed up the face of the cliff, bringing down more of its shaling surface with every furious assault. In that noise and turmoil, the voice of the shrieking boy but added to his terrors, and availed him naught ; again he retired into his cave, hoping that, wet as he was with the foam and spray, his retreat was too high up, for the waves themselves to reach, for he knew there was no escape for him. If he were to crawl up, and cling to a jutting crag above him, he could only expect to be blown off, or to drop with fatigue into the savage gulf beneath. So—dreadful as the feeling of waiting for death must be—that awful state of feeling poor Stephen endured for nearly an hour ! It was about midnight—at the top of the spring tide ; the sickly moon was struggling to look out from among the fierce clouds—the loud brawling of the wild breakers, as they had chased each other in shallow fury, in the earlier part of the tide, was now changed ; and the wave

beat against the cliff with a loud roar and a deep booming, that sometimes sounded like the hollow reports of distant canon.

Stephen now sat crouched and shivering in his cave, drenched by the still ascending waves, and with his eyes fixed on the opening, when a monstrous billow rose above his head, (as if it was looking in upon him), broke itself against the jutting crag, swung its whole weight into the cavern, and having dashed and bruised the wretched boy against the side, rushed out again, bearing him with it into the raging sea ! In a very short time the tide turned, the gale lulled, Swale's boat weathered the ruins, and Stephen, *stunned*, but not dead, was picked up by Bill Clifton.

The moon now broke out from the clouds, and shewed our humane Montague the pale face and slender figure of a half starved boy ; at the same moment a deep groan from Jones drew on him the attention of all the persons in the boat. Not one expression had escaped him during that fearful night ; he had sat in a sullen mood, half hoping, half fearing, that the furious sea would spare him the prolonged terrors and the disgrace of a pub-

lic execution, for he did not suppose that those in the boat would ever reach land alive. The sudden drop of the wind, therefore, Bill's assurances of safety, with the bustle, and his courage in saving the floating body, had engaged the gloomy wretch's attention; but when he saw the wasted form of that youth whom he had met a few weeks before in health and happiness, in innocence and security, his own monstrous guilt seemed to strike him for the first time! He groaned heavily, and hiding his face with his hands, looked no more at his young victim. Montague, in the mean time, with the assistance of Bill and one of the officers, used every means he could think of, and that their situation would allow, in order to recover the life that had almost left poor Stephen. A fluttering and a clammy warmth about his heart, assured them that he was not dead; but they long tried in vain to restore him. His wet clothes prevented the heat which was induced by rubbing his chest, from being of any service; and his preservers were all so much in the same situation, owing to the drenching waters, that it appeared of little use to exchange clothes with him. However, Montague's

boat cloak had, he thought, certainly prevented his own under garments from receiving so great a quantity of wet as the poor boy's clothes had received ; so he humanely stripped off his own coat and waistcoat, and taking off the soaked body clothing from the youth, he wrapped him in those that yet retained a genial warmth, and then continued his benevolent attentions to him. They now stood boldly away for Yarmouth, for the gale had so moderated, that they ventured to hoist a sail ; the wind shifted, too, to the north-east, as it subsided ; and they again bounded forwards among those shoals, which were as well known to our experienced fishermen as the turnpikes and trees are to coachmen on a high road. By sunrise, as Bill had foretold, the " Noble Triumph " swung into the safe harbour of Yarmouth, and in half an hour the slowly recovering Stephen was in bed at an hotel, with Montague sitting by him.

The news of Jones's capture at the Hague was well known at Yarmouth, so that the town was overflowing with persons who had flocked thither in order to see and hear all about the murder ; for so many improbable and contradictory rumours

were afloat, that no one knew what to believe. He was expected by the packet, therefore our little party from the fishing boat, at that early hour, attracted no notice: the news was soon spread, however, and the whole town was in commotion. The morning wore away; Stephen still slumbered — and the kind-hearted young man, who sat beside him, had dropped into a doze, when our hero awoke, and finding himself in a bed, he concluded that he had been discovered, and was again a prisoner. Supposing himself to be alone, he uttered a deep groan, and hid himself from the light; Montague started up, and leaning over him, uncovered his face, which was of a deadly pale colour, and said, “ How are you, my poor lad? I think a little breakfast would revive you;—you have had a famous sleep;—do you feel much the worse for your salt water bath?” These kind expressions astonished the youth, who stared with wondering eyes at the face of his friend;—then bursting into tears, he sobbed out, “ Oh, don’t look so kind!—don’t look so kind!—look cruel, and then I sha’n’t mind it half so much!—for you are cruel to wish to keep me alive, in order to hang me,

instead of letting me die quietly here! Pray! pray let me die, or kill me at once; it won't be much trouble to you to kill me, for I am very weak—and then, when I'm dead, my poor parents won't have the disgrace and sorrow of knowing that I was hanged! and hanged for murder too!!”

“For murder! you a murderer! so young and such a villain! Ah! if I had known that, when I had you saved from a watery grave, I—”

“Oh, no! no! *I* murder the poor gentleman! why I never even saw any thing belonging to him, but his coat that was on a chair! I got up so softly too, for fear of disturbing him, and never opened the shutters.—I murder him! But it's of no use denying it,” added Stephen, with another burst of grief, “for no one will believe me, because I can't prove that I did not!”

Here his agony became alarming. Montague had hoped he might discover that this youth was he who was stated in the papers to have escaped from prison; so hastily ringing the bell, he said, “I believe you, my poor boy; compose yourself; did this murder happen at Paxton?”

“You know it did, Sir! What! is the murderer

found? Oh, tell me—tell me pray, Sir, for you do look too kind indeed to have me put into prison—only tell me if he is found, and——”

“ I hope he is. Whether he be or not, however, I believe you to be innocent; and rely on me, I will be your friend, and will never let you suffer death for a crime of which you are as guiltless as I am myself! Waiter, bring breakfast immediately!” said he, to one who just then came to answer the bell.

Joy was more difficult for Stephen to bear than sorrow had been: for when Montague turned again to him, he found that the poor boy had fainted, and was lying back as white as the pillow on which he rested. The young man was alarmed—rang again furiously—ordering the waiter, who had run back on this second summons, to send for a medical man, and to beg the mistress of the house, or a chambermaid, would come, as the lad had fainted. The usual remedies were applied: and Stephen had recovered and was taking nourishment when the surgeon arrived. He recommended that the youth should be kept as quiet as possible,

and took his leave, saying he would send him a composing draught.

Montague would answer none of the questions which Stephen eagerly asked ; but told him, that if he remained very quiet all day, he should hear everything that was known respecting the murderer on the following morning : adding, “ Make yourself quite easy, you are perfectly safe, and with a friend ; so try to get well and strong as fast as you can ; and I will go down stairs and see——”

“ Oh but, Sir ! Sir ! I don't know your name ; do tell it me, that I may think about it if I cannot sleep ; and oh—pray, Sir, be so kind as send to my parents, (poor things ! how glad they will be ; and Sarah, and my uncle, and all !) Will you be so good, Sir, as to write and ask them to come down here ?”

“ My name is Montague ; and——”

“ Why that is the name, in the handbill, of the gentleman whom they said I had murdered ! What ! did you escape, Sir ? And is there no one killed after all ? How glad I am !”

“ Yes, there was a gentleman murdered, and he

was my cousin. I will write directly to your parents. And now good bye, my dear lad ; remember what the doctor said. Oh ! here is the draught ; come, down with it ; that's right ! Waiter ! close the other half of that shutter, the light will keep him awake else. Desire them to keep as quiet as they can down stairs. Farewell, Stephen !" added Montague, looking back, smiling and nodding kindly to the grateful boy.

As soon as he lost sight of his benevolent friend, long forgotten feelings of happiness and security came over him soothingly, and deliciously : the certainty of possessing a friend near him ; the hope of soon seeing his parents ; and the delight of having his character cleared from the disgrace which had fallen upon it, were such new and exquisite subjects for thought, that he lay quiet, shedding tears of happiness, till a sweet sleep stole over him, from which he did not awake till the evening. His friend, in the meantime, had not been idle. He had taken the necessary steps in order to forward Jones's trial, which was to come on at the next assizes. Montague had written to Mr. Bancroft to meet him and his son at Paxton.

(to which village he intended to go immediately), as he hoped to hear more particulars on the spot where the murder had been committed, than at any other place. The next morning, after Stephen had heard from his friend the whole account of his discovery of Jones, and had related, in return, all that had befallen himself, he said :—

“ Now, Sir, the fisherman who brought you over, must be Dora’s husband ! Do you think he is gone home yet ? I should like to know.”

“ I cannot tell ; but I will walk down to the quay and inquire, while the horses are being put to the post-chaise : for you and I are going a journey. But why do you wish to know if Swale is returned home ?”

“ Ah, Sir ! can you ask that question ?” replied Stephen.

“ Well, no matter what your motive is, I will go and inquire. But,” continued he, “ you may wish to give the waiter a trifle, and as you have not yet recovered your two guineas, I will be your banker ; here are fifteen shillings for you.”

“ Thank you, Sir !—Ah !” continued Stephen, as Montague left the room, “ I hope Swale will not

be gone, that I may send word to Dora, how grateful I am for her kindness to me!" Montague soon after entered the room, followed by the hardy fisherman, who had been home, and had returned again, bringing Dora and little Willie back with him; for they wanted to see the lad who had been picked up by Bill Clifton, as they had no doubt it was the poor boy who used to hover about their little dwelling of a night. Twice had Dora seen a youth stealing away from the cottage, while she was out of bed looking over sea for her husband's boat; she was almost sure that the lad was he whom she had nursed, and who was supposed to be guilty of murder; and the very day that Stephen was washed away, the kind woman heard that the real murderer was taken, and she had resolved to watch for the poor boy, and tell him the news.

"Ah, Swale!" said the happy fellow, rising from his chair, and shaking hands with the weather-beaten, warm-hearted man,—“when shall you see your wife? I am so much obliged to you both, and to Willy too, for the kindness I have received!"

“Dontee say a word about it, maester, now dontee! You might a trusted my wife with your secret, she'd never a betrayed you; for all along she thought you was as innocent as w'ur Willy. I'm glad, main glad, to find you're likely to get well over your troubles. Would you like to see Dora, maester? She and Willy would take it very kind if you'd speak a word with um.”

“O dear yes! What, is Dora here?”

“Ye, she be indeed, Sir!” added Swale, and opening the door, he brought in his wife and son. Montague was much pleased with the gratitude that Stephen shewed; and when he saw him slip the whole of the fifteen shillings into Dora's hand, “to buy Willy some more fish-hooks, instead of that which he took,” the young man instantly added a five pound note to the present, “to buy *her a new flint and steel.*” She could not think what he meant, so Montague related to her the particulars of poor Stephen's sojourn in the cliff, and his nightly visits to her cottage. The chaise was now waiting; and as Montague wished much to quit Yarmouth, the grateful Swales took leave immediately, after our hero had assured them

that he should try and persuade his parents to come and see them.

During their journey, Montague told Stephen, that as he had been put in prison on suspicion, it was necessary that he should again be placed in confinement until the time of the trial; "But," added he, "you need not look so pale and distressed about it; *you know* there is no danger of your being condemned; so cheer up; you will soon see another tender-hearted friend, nay, two kind creatures, Mrs. Ward, and Mr. Chubb, —your parents, too, as well as myself, will be on the spot, so do not be cast down!" But the youth had suffered too much, not to dread being again a prisoner, although he should be so merely for form's sake.

The "Golden Lion," however, now showed its valiant mane, that flared up from its bulky shoulders like flames carved in wood; and under the goodly sign, stood our old friend, Mrs. Nipper, whom the noise of the wheels had drawn to the door; there she stood in all the splendor of her afternoon finery, consisting of the reddest gown, and the bluest flowers in her cap, that mortal eyes

ever beheld ! And, oh ! what a torrent of words (her own peculiar eloquence,) burst out upon the travellers, when she recognised Stephen, and discovered who his companion was !

“ This way, Sir, if you please ! Ah, this was the very room where the poor dear gentleman (and he was a gentleman !) eat the last meal as ever he eat in this varsal world !—in this very chair did he take out his beautiful purse to pay me my bill ; aye, the table was hitched jist so, cornder-wise, (corner-wise) as he leaned his elber upon it ! And then, Sir, only to think of the discoveries that have been made in the Golden Lion ! Why, Mr. Montague, do you know, Sir, that the other night—yes—last Friday was a week—we had a gentleman and lady a stopping here all night ; so they slept in *that room*, Sir—the double bedded one ;—and so, when they went to bed, and come for to try to lock the door, lo and behold ye they couldn't turn the key ; so they sends for Nip, my husband, to look at it, and if he couldn't manage it, he was to send for a smith. However, Nip were a drinking, (as usual) and so I was forced to go ; so I tries the lock, and I tries the

lock, and at last I bethinks me, that some dust might have lodged in it ; so I off down stairs, got a bit of wire, and twisting it, I groped it about in the lock, and what do you think I found ? Ah ! you'll never guess—but its something that would help to clear *you*, Master Bancroft, if you wanted any thing of the sort, which it's a providence you don't, you being as innocent as the bleating lamb, as I may say."

" And what was this curious thing, Mrs. Nipper ?" said Ernest Montague, who was tired of his landlady's gossip.

" What ?—why, Sir, I were going to tell ye—why, *this*, this bit of paper," taking a small crumpled piece of the direction of a letter from her little well worn pocket-book. " Here is '*Jones*,' the *Mister* is left behind, you know, then under is —— '*ford Street*,' and under that '*Garden*.' "

" God bless me !" exclaimed Ernest, why, Stephen, that is the fellow's address, '*Bedford Street, Covent Garden* !' I have seen my cousin direct notes to him !"

" Well, but, Mr. Montague, you havn't heard all yet !" exclaimed Mrs. Nipper, tapping the

palm of her left hand, with the forefinger of her right. "To my sartin knowledge, that door was locked the night before the poor gentleman, your blessed cousin, slept there, for I carried a gentleman some water to shave with that very indential morning, and I couldn't open the door, and he called out, 'Put it down, Sally!' (thinking it was w'ur Jenny, you know,) 'for,' says he, 'I forgot I had locked the door last night!' Well, Sir,—well, Master Bancroft, more news still! W'ur ostler, Robin, had shot a stray pigeon last week, as was perched on the top of one of the chimbleys, and down the poor cretur tumbled,—down the chimbley; so Robin went up into that room, where Jones slept—the single bedded room, you understand—to look for this pigeon. Well, he gets under the empty chimbley, where there's no fire-place, and looks up the shaft, and there perched the bird in a hole that had been left in the brick-work. Well,—so, in reaching up to take the pigeon, it so fluttered and scuttered, that it knocked something down, which fell at Robin ostler's feet; and what do you think that was? A handsome pocket-book, with your poor dear murdered cousin's nam

in gold letters, inside of it ! There's a providence for ye ! I'm sure, in all my life, I think I never heard of sich a wonderful and fortunate discovery ! Did you, Sir !”

Ernest was indeed astonished and delighted that two more proofs of his young friend's innocence had been brought to light, and that every thing appeared to fix the guilt on one individual.

Mrs. Nipper bustled off to fetch the pocket-book, which Montague at once recognised as having belonged to his cousin, and taking out the letter which had been written by him in that very room, he compared the writing, and returned the pocket-book to her. She would, perhaps, have continued for the next half hour, to talk to the travellers, had not a stage-coach dashed up to the door, which she hastened to attend.

The next minute Stephen, who was leaning out of the window to look at it, cried out, “My father !—outside !—and my mother and Sally getting out of the coach !” Away he ran, and had flung his arms round his mother's neck, before she could get into the house. This happy meeting, it would be impossible to describe. So much was asked and

told, and wondered at,—so many tears were shed by the mother and sister, as they listened to Stephen's "perils by land and sea;" so many thanks to Ernest; and, in short, the little party did not separate till a late hour.

Stephen was remanded to prison, but was now cheered by the society of his friends; the trial soon came on,—neither judge nor jury hesitated for a moment, in their belief of Jones's guilt; indeed, the miserable creature confessed the crime, in the evening of the day of trial; he was left for execution, and, in due time, was hanged. Ernest became so attached to our hero, that he obtained his father's consent to take him into the counting-house. Montague being now partner, with a rich and respectable merchant, this kind offer was, of course, willingly, nay, *gratefully* accepted; and, in the course of a few years, Stephen was taken into the firm, that is, he became a partner with "Sterling and Montague."

Thus have we seen, that, however innocence for a time may suffer, it will finally be made manifest; that, however guilt for a time may triumph, it will eventually be punished.

PRINCE BASTIAN.



PRINCE BASTIAN.

THE family of Mr. Clarkson, a respectable school-master, had just assembled to tea, one evening in February, 18—, when a ring at the front bell announced a visitor.

“The boys are all returned; I wonder who it can be,” exclaimed Eliza Clarkson.

“Perhaps it is the little boy from abroad, whom papa expects,” replied her elder sister, Isabella. Here the man-servant opened the door, and told his master that a footman had brought a dark young gentleman, and begged to speak with him.

In a few minutes Mr. Clarkson re-entered the

room, leading "a dark young gentleman," *indeed* ; it was a perfectly black child, with huge whites to his eyes, woolly knotted hair, a nose half the width of his face, and teeth like glittering dominoes, who came crying, flinging and floundering into the glare of the lighted room, and astonished the whole group into utter silence. Mrs. Clarkson left the tea-table, to welcome and encourage the bewildered and unhappy boy, thus suddenly introduced among strangers in a foreign land.

"Poor little fellow," said she, taking hold of his black hand, which hung dangling by his side. "Will you have some tea, my dear?"

"Noa," said he, after she had repeated the question three times, then shouting "Robet, Robet," he again burst into tears of mingled anger and sorrow, and darting at the door of the room, tried to make his escape. Mr. Clarkson went to the child, and mildly drew him towards the fire, seated him on his knee, and tried to suit his conversation to the little fellow's limited knowledge of our language. A cup of sweet tea, and a tempting piece of toast, were brought to him

by Isabella, while the young Eliza ventured near this phenomenon, with a new book of coloured prints. All in vain, nothing would console him ; fresh floods of tears, and new outcries for " Robert," with eager glances at the room door, whenever it was opened, were his only replies to any questions that were put to, or kindness shown him. At length, Mrs. Clarkson said,

" Perhaps, Bel, if you were to go to the piano, he would be amused." She went, and judiciously selecting a lively air, began to play ; the effect was magical. The forlorn little boy was astonished ; his blood-shot eyes no longer flashed with tiger-like ferocity ; he suffered his tears to be wiped, sobbed in silence, and gradually became " still as any stone," with his mouth open, and his eyes fixed on the instrument.

The change was too pleasing to all the pitying family, for any one to wish Isabella to cease ; she played on, varying the airs, and trying not to let the child observe that she was watching his singular countenance. He was soon at her side, and his first attempt at conversation was addressed to her.

“ Me loikee it !” said he.

“ Do you ? then I will play you some more ; and shall I sing to you ?” added she.

“ Yaa.”

So she sang song after song, taking care to omit Storace’s pretty little piece, “ The Poor Black Boy.” Isabella now ventured to ask him his name, as he stood lolling and rolling his pliant body against her elbow, and staring up in her face with vacant wonder.

“ Tell me your name, and I will sing again,” said she, smiling at him kindly.

“ Bastian !” replied he.

“ Well, mine is Isabella ; Miss Isabella they call me ;—can you remember that, Bastian ?”

“ Yaa, Mees-a-Bel !” said the boy, eager to show his skill and gratitude. His new friend could scarcely forbear laughing at this novel sound of her name, and her little sister, who had quietly drawn up to the piano, was so amused at it, that she fairly ran away to giggle in a corner, lest Bastian’s feelings should be hurt. Eliza, however, soon returned, and finding that the black boy was less like a wild animal, than he had been,

she was no longer afraid: again she offered him her pretty book—but it had no charms for him; he found too much to astonish him in his new world, in the wonders of English manners, white faces, and curious furniture, to feel interested in pictures. However, he became sociable with the little girl, pawed her glossy curls like a monkey, looked with wonder at her white flesh, and suffered her to touch his woolly hair and large ears, without expressing anger. It must be owned that she slyly looked at her hands afterwards, to see if any of the black from off his dark skin, had soiled them; but she was very young, so this little folly may be forgiven. But music could not be continued all night; poor Bastian must go to bed, and here was another difficulty. The boy had come over from Guinea, with one black attendant; this man had left him as soon as he had given him up to the merchant, to whose care his father, the king, had consigned him. Mr. Flower, the merchant, was glad to send the child off immediately to Mr. Clarkson; and the footman, Robert, (or “Robet,” as Bastian called him,) who brought the child, had been with him but a few

hours. Thus the poor boy had been thrown continually among fresh persons, and torn from every new acquaintance, almost as soon as he had found one. He was too young, (being but nine years of age,) and knew too little of the English language, and of his own situation, to comprehend why he was so shuffled from house to house ; but he felt it to be cruel ; knew not when these changes would cease, and *now* resented every attempt to take him from the cheerful room and merry companions, with whom he was beginning to be happy. Mrs. Clarkson had decided that he should, for the present, sleep in her room, as he was young, and his situation was so strange ; but to reach her sleeping room, the kitchen had to be passed through. Hither Isabella had contrived to entice him (for he would not move without his musical friend) ; but beyond the kitchen, her influence could not induce him to go : down he flung himself before the great fire, on the warm hearth, and lay rolling and sprawling in a sort of sleepy delight, much to the amusement of some, and the pretended alarm of other of the servants, whom, curiosity to see the black princely prodigy, had

drawn together. In this comfortable berth, then, Bastian fell asleep ; here he was undressed, quietly carried up stairs, and placed in a warm bed ; a servant being left to watch him, with strict injunctions to call Mees-a-Bel if he should awake.

When the family had assembled at supper, Isabella asked her father why he had not told them that the youth whom he expected, was a black ; adding, “ I should like to know from what part of Africa he comes ; for I suppose, as he has woolly hair, he is an African, papa ? ”

Her father smiled, and replied, “ My reason, Bel, for not informing you of this wonderful arrival, was simply, that I might enjoy the surprise that you and your sister would feel : your mother, of course, was aware of the child’s coming. I could not foresee that the poor little fellow would suffer so much sorrow ; but when he finds that he is not to be removed again, he will soon be reconciled, I have no doubt. I understand from Mr. Flower, to whose care Bastian is consigned, that his father is king of a large district in Guinea, on the banks of the river Gambia. He is friendly towards Europeans, the English espe-

cially ; and he is an upright and honourable man. Mr. Flower has large dealings with him in gold dust, elephant's teeth, and other articles of African production. This boy is his eldest son ; and he wishes to have him educated in England, that he may acquire enlarged views ; and so improve his mind, that his country may be benefited when he shall become king. I shall be rejoiced," continued Mr. Clarkson, turning towards one of the gentlemen of his establishment, "the Latin Usher," as he was called among the pupils, "I shall be rejoiced if I find this little fellow's capacity for acquiring information of a superior order to that which is generally attributed to the black nations : the opportunities he is likely to have of improving his countrymen, will be so much greater than they would be, if he were only a private individual."

"Is it not then your opinion, Sir, that the blacks are our inferiors in every respect?" said Mr. Brown.

"I have seen too few of the dark people, for me to judge from observation ; but assuredly I incline to think we were all originally alike in our capacities ; and that circumstances alone have caused

the white people to become superior to their black brethren. I know the popular opinion to be, that they are our inferiors in every respect;—but the Egyptians—those enslaved, illiterate, abject, miserable people, are a living proof that the opinion is erroneous; as it is well known that in the earlier ages, with the exception of the Hindoos, the Egyptians were the most learned people in the world, long before the boastful Europeans had emerged from their original barbarism. The very temples of that once great people, which, by modern ingenuity, have been unburied, and brought again into daylight,* prove that the admired architecture of Greece and Rome has been borrowed from the blacks. In short, Professor Blumenbach, of Germany, has now in his possession works written by blacks on every science, highly creditable to the authors, and proving still more that the popular opinion respecting the inferiority of the Africans is erroneous.”

Whether Bastian became an additional proof that Mr. Clarkson and Professor Blumenbach were correct, or whether he remained to add another proof to the “popular opinion,”—

* See Belzoni's Travels.

we shall see : in the mean time, we must attend our young prince on his entrance into the school-room among seventy boys,—his future companions.

On the morning, then, after his arrival at Enterfield, his two new friends, Bel and Eliza, with their mother, escorted him across the large playground, into the school-room, just as the whole establishment was about to begin breakfast. The boy's countenance was full of wonder, as his large eyes rolled over the long rows of faces, all turned towards him, with various expressions of surprise, ridicule, or amazement at this extraordinary looking school-boy. A dead silence succeeded the clatter and bustle of preparing for breakfast, which Bastion himself interrupted with a "Hau ! hau !"—a sort of laugh, so sheepish, yet so loud, so uncouth, and so *very* droll, that the whole assemblage burst into a fit of uncontrollable merriment, which lasted unchecked for several minutes : no one could stop it, for no one, not even Mr. Clarkson, could resist the effect of Bastian's wonderful explosion of mirth.

Silence being at length restored, and our sable hero seated between the two girls, gnawing away

at a huge piece of bread and butter, like a baboon at a cocoa nut; the usual signal was given for the youths to stand up and say grace. As they arose, the "new boy" was admonished to be quiet; the admonition, however, as well as the ceremony, were of course both unintelligible to him, and just as the first words were uttered,

"What's a maatee?" shouted Bastian.

This second strange and unexpected noise was too much. Again the whole seventy boys burst into shouts of laughter, and they were compelled to omit the ceremony; indeed, for several days afterwards, our prince was obliged to be removed from the room at those times.

It would be curious to trace the changes in the feelings of his school-fellows towards him; but our young readers will be naturally more anxious to hear of Bastian than of other boys; so we will merely observe that, it was very evident they were disappointed in his appearance. Of course the news that a black prince had arrived was known in a few minutes afterwards, and they had doubtless allowed themselves to expect to see some of the usual trappings of African royalty about

the boy. Beads, feathers, palm branches, bows and arrows, a greased body and naked feet, in spite of their better judgment, found place in their imaginations; so that they were not a little vexed to see simply a negro boy; though *that* was in itself a wonderful sight to most of them. Black men are common enough; a black child is a rarity in England. The vanity, however, of many of his school-fellows was roused and gratified when they observed that Bastian was clothed very much worse than they were themselves; for he had been fitted, or rather, *misfitted*, at an inferior "slop shop" in Portsmouth. He had neither frill nor collar to relieve the dark hue of his head and face; his jacket and trousers seemed to have been contrived out of a dingy blue blanket; his "pepper and salt" looking worsted stockings had never felt the decorum of a garter; and a pair of uncouth shoes, gaping away from his long heels, made his feet look like those of a "two toed sloth."

For many days the child was allowed to associate only occasionally with the other boys, so that he was almost entirely with Mrs. Clarkson, "Mess-a-Bel," and "Liza." The little girl hap-

pened to have a black doll at that time, to which Bastian took a hearty dislike: he used to hide her, beat her, and tell her "he no loikee her, cos she so augly;" and one day Mrs. Clarkson found him actually hanging the unfortunate doll; he had put a string round its neck, and was, with singular vigour, jerking it up to the iron rod of her bedstead. Strange, that he should have disliked *that*, which must have reminded him of his countrymen! Yet he admired himself; and was never happier than when he could obtain ribbons, flowers, feathers, and necklaces, in which to adorn himself before a looking-glass. Our prince was quite a privileged person in the family—was fond of Mrs. Clarkson, and used to be, as we have said, continually with her and her daughters. One day she sat at work, and Bastian was in his favourite position at her elbow, rolling his supple body about from side to side, when she found that he was looking earnestly into her face.

"Well, Bastian," said she, "what do you think of me?"

"I think you ~~sa~~ augly!" replied he. (Mrs. C. was a very pretty woman.)

"Indeed! I am sorry for that. Would they all in your country think me so ugly?" asked she.

"Yas, you sa augly, you froight de men in a ma countree!" replied he, gravely.

After a short time he became as one of the other children—was a good boy—rather passionate—neither very clever, nor particularly dull—was attached to the family, and agreed well with his school-fellows. In a few months the black man, who had attended him to England, returned to Africa; but before his departure he went down to Enterfield, to see his little prince, and to take back any message or present that he might have to send. The child, however, no sooner saw the black man than he put his hands before his eyes, screamed, and ran away, saying, "He so blaack, and so augly, me no loikee to see him." Mrs. Clarkson made up a little packet of beads, &c. (as if from him) for the sisters of her little charge, and the man went.

For more than two years after this event, our hero remained at Enterfield, making slow but certain progress in such studies as were suited to his age; and his excellent tutor, Mr. Clarkson,

entertained sanguine hopes that, in the course of a few more years, the boy would have attained so much useful information, as to gratify his father, and to become an honour to all who had had the care of him during his sojourn in England. Alas ! these hopes were false.

“ Isabel, what do you think ? ” said Mrs. Clarkson one day to her daughter—“ poor Bastian is going back to Africa immediately.”

“ Oh, how sorry I am ! and Eliza, how grieved she will be ; but why, mamma, is he going ? ”

“ His younger brother is lately dead of the small-pox ; and his father is inconsolable for his loss ; he is fearful, too, that his eldest son may die in a foreign land ; so the king sent off for this boy to return home directly.”

Bastian heard the news with more of sorrow than pleasure. The recollection of his native land,—its burning sun, and shady palms,—his black mother, and naked little sisters, had faded from his recollection like a dream ; and he took little interest in his far distant home. However, loaded with presents, good wishes, and kindness,

Bastian Pearce left his friends at Enterfield, who, in due time, heard of his safe arrival in Africa.

We must now lose sight of our hero for a time, and return to Mr. Clarkson. He educated no more black princes; but many worthy characters are now living, who have been benefited by his excellent precepts, and more excellent example, by his noble integrity, his unwearied assiduity, and his truly mild and judicious mode of instruction. This eulogy may be allowed from one who had the best opportunities of knowing the truth of it. He, and his admirable wife, remained a few years longer, where they had for more than thirty years resided with honour and credit; and then, having disposed of the concern, they retired with their youngest daughter to reside at the sea-side. Isabella married a gentleman named Turret, and settled in London.

In a few more years, Mrs. Turret's eldest son, Charles, who was now fifteen years of age, made choice of the sea as a profession, and his parents having by great good fortune, as they supposed, obtained for him a situation with a worthy cap-

tain, he left England in a vessel bound to Van Diemen's Land.

Charles Turret is our other hero, and all who like sailors, will be pleased with him. He was merry, light-hearted, and brave—loved his home, but delighted in his profession. He was active, acute, and fond of roving; full of fun, strong, healthy, well made, good-looking, and intelligent. In short, he appeared to be formed for the sea, and to sea he went. 'Poor fellow! his outset was rough indeed! for a whole month the vessel was beating about in the Channel; he was sea sick, and he thought of home. Before he had lost sight of his native shores one week, the villainous character of his captain became apparent. This man, who had made Mr. Turret the most solemn promises to instruct Charles in the science of navigation; who had had the boy committed to his charge, with all a father's earnest anxiety; who knew the style in which the youth had been brought up, and who had engaged to attend to his welfare; this worthless man, not only endangered the safety of the ship, by giving way to the habit of drinking, but suffered every indig-

nity to be heaped on the unfortunate lad, whom he was bound to protect.

On landing at Hobart's town, in New South Wales, Charles, who had been accustomed at home to be waited on by servants, was obliged to become the servant of this fellow, whom we will call Captain Cooler. He stood behind his chair at dinner time, lighted the fires, cleaned the knives, bought butter, meat, milk, brandy—in short he was little better than a slave. To add to the youth's discomfit, he had scarcely been on shore six weeks, when one night thieves broke through the wall of the house, and wrenching open his chest, took away every thing he had in the world, excepting the common clothes which he had worn on the previous day. Poor Charles was thus left destitute, at twelve thousand miles distance from home; and the barbarian of a captain, who knew what a handsome outfit he had lost, made him no recompense, and actually gave him nothing but a pair of his old trowsers and a shirt.

The ship, after leaving Van Diemen's Land, went round Cape Horn with a cargo of wheat,

to Rio de Janeiro, where Cooler quitted her, and went back to New South Wales, leaving our hero to return to England: and home he came, with nothing but the clothes on his back, which, in consequence of his good conduct, the owners of the ship had enabled him to purchase at Liverpool.

So much unmerited suffering would have disgusted the generality of lads with the sea; but Charles, after having enjoyed himself with his friends and family, (which had removed into Wiltshire,) again longed to resume the life he had chosen; so once more, his father sought for a worthy captain; and as the lad had had great experience—had received a noble character from the chief mate, who was next in command to captain Cooler—and as he had moreover been applying himself diligently, for some months, to learn navigation, he was judged capable of taking a junior officer's situation. This time he was more fortunate; he had an upright, active, worthy captain, and in high spirits he prepared to leave his home once more. His kind grandmother, Mrs. Clarkson, (her excellent husband had been

dead for some years,) considered that, as from her former situation, she was acquainted with many eminent men abroad, who had been educated at Enterfield, it would be proper to provide her grandson with letters of introduction to them, in the event of his being by any chance in their neighbourhood.

Among others, she thought of our old friend, Prince Bastian Pearce, and to him she wrote, recalling the circumstances of his early education with Mr. Clarkson at Enterfield, to his recollection, and stating that her grandson was the bearer of the letter. With these letters, Charles Turret set sail in a free-trader to the East Indies.*

The usual allotment of storms and calms attended our young hero; and nothing occurred worthy of note until the ship Nereid had passed Cape Verd Islands, and was making Cape Roxo. The Nereid, we have said, was a free-trader: a part of her cargo was to be discharged on the coast of Africa, near Cape Roxo, and very soon

* The whole of this tale has hitherto been *strictly true*, with the exception of the names of the parties in England. BASTIAN PEARCE is not fictitious.

after, she entered the mouth of the river Gambia. Here a storm, or rather hurricane, of exceeding violence, damaged the vessel ; she broke from her moorings, lost her rudder, and drifted during the whole night before the gale. In the morning, the crew found themselves far up the river ; the weather had cleared, the storm had subsided, and they prepared to tow her back again towards the coast, in order that the damage might be repaired ; for in their present situation, they did not suppose that such succour as they required could be obtained. The banks of the river were not above two miles from them on either side ; and the curiosity of the younger men in the ship was naturally excited, to see something more of African scenery, now that so unexpected and so good an opportunity had occurred.

Our young friend, Charles Turret, ever alert for novelty and bustle, begged the captain to allow him to take four of the men, and row ashore, adding, “ I hope to find something worthy of your supper table to-night, Captain. I used to shoot parrots by dozens in Van Diemen’s Land ;

and they were as good as pigeons ; I wonder what sort of birds will fall in my way here ?”

Captain Manly smiled, and bidding his young favourite return by nine o'clock, continued his directions to the ship's carpenter ; while our delighted youth proceeded to select his men, clean his pet fowling piece, and bid his friend Frank Stephens farewell. This young man was second mate, and Charles's senior by a year or two. They were very much attached to each other, and were sorry now to be separated ; but as Frank was on duty, they knew it would be in vain to petition for him to go ashore. Captain Manly united the two qualities, (so rarely possessed by one person), exceeding good temper with strict discipline. Charles had been on duty during that part of the night in which the storm raged with the greatest violence ; he had worked very hard, and his activity and seaman-like conduct had pleased the captain highly ; so that he was anxious to indulge the boyish whim of going on shore, though the assistance of “ all hands” was wanted.

The jolly boat was lowered, young Turret's picked men descended, and shaking Stephens's hand, he dropped with a light heart into the trim little vessel, which instantly shot away from the shade of the Nereid, like a swallow from its nest. The rich tones of Charles's voice floated over the water to Frank's listening ear, as he leaned on the ship's side, half angry that he could not accompany his merry friend, who was singing,

" 'Tis only a sailor can value the sea,
The life of a sailor's the life for me."

Away scudded the boat, and Stephens, with a telescope at his eye, continued to watch its progress towards land. As they neared the shore, a crocodile that lay basking in the shallow water, attracted the attention of the boat's crew; and our eager hero would have instantly treated him to a few English bullets, had he not fortunately recollected that he should probably require all his ammunition to kill game which would be eatable: so ordering the men to pull close to the huge reptile, he took a peep at its disgusting jaws, and it dived from his sight.

"That's a queer looking lubber," said Will Clews, one of the rowers.

"I hav'n't a very qualmy stomick, but, my heart ! if them great paddles of his, as he struck off downerds, didn't turn me as sick as a steam passenger !" exclaimed Sam Stud, another sailor.

"Well, now, for my part, I've seen them things, that is, *alligators* I should say, by dozens and dozens, in South America ; and I don't care a quid for their great jaws. I've been a pretty piece nigher to them than we were just now to this bit of a gemman, and I don't vallie 'em a rope's end. Ah, Sam Stud, when you've sailed as long as I have among sich fry, your cheeks won't turn quite so chalky like, as they look now." This was said with a knowing hitch of his *shiny* round hat, by Nicholas Trunnel, or "Old Nic," as he was good humouredly called by his ship-mates. He was a worthy, pleasant tempered fellow, the oldest sailor on board ; and was much looked up to by the juniors. "He had been every where, and had seen every thing," they said ; so that on all occasions. when any new circumstance occurred, he was appealed to, and his

opinion taken. The deference that was paid him made our worthy old Nic a little stately, and apt to "talk like a book," as his messmates said; but they all liked him. Our hero sat, after the crocodile had disappeared, with cheeks—not quite so "*chalky*" as Stud's were, but it must be owned that there was less of the rose colour in them than usual. He had been familiar enough with herds of seals, kangaroos, and never ending flocks of parrots,—to say nothing of fishes of every shape and kind; but this was his first introduction to a crocodile. He said nothing, but he was glad,—yes, although a brave youth,—*he was glad* to hear "Old Nic" say—

"I never knew any of *them varmint* attack a boat load of persons, Mr. Turret, Sir, never!"*

They were, by this time, close in shore; and Charles, having selected a little creek, overshadowed with beautiful trees, steered the boat for its pretty shelter from the sun, and desiring Sam Stud, and Dick Pettrel, to lash her to a stump of a tree, and to await his return, he told Will

* So says Humboldt, in his Personal Narrative.

Clews and Nick Trunnel each to take a cutlass, and go on shore with him.

Off they set in high spirits, the young officer stopping to admire the novel productions of nature, which every where surrounded him. Nic found, and brought him several curious and delicious fruits; among them was the custard apple,* filled with yellow cream-like pulp, very similar to a custard in flavor; which, while he ate it, made Charles think of home. In a short time, Trunnel found a large, oblong, green fruit, which he brought to his young officer, saying,—

“ Here, Mr. Turret, Sir, here’s a thing now, that God has kindly sent, to refresh the poor black, hot, thirsty souls, as live in these broiling latitudes: now this ere fruit, Will Clews, d’ye see, is worth more to the naked niggers, than a sea of grog would be: this, Mr. Turret, Sir, is what we English call a sour sop.† It’s got a larneder name than that, but sour sop is what I’ve know’d it called by, these five and twenty year.”

Charles was delighted; and refreshed by the

* *Anona reticulata*.

† *Anona maculata*.

cool, acid, and delicious pulp which the rind enclosed. The little party continued to advance through a wood: they had hitherto seen no human being; "the birds were tired with the hot sun;" and our hero's gun remained undischarged. The trees were all so beautiful, and so new to the youth, that Old Nic was in constant requisition to tell their names, and explain their uses. They had now seated themselves, to enjoy quietly, the shade above them, the tempting fruits, and the coolness of the noon breeze, which had just sprung up (that breeze which renders the burning climate of Guinea so bearable). Old Nic was explaining the uses of the *Malaguetta* pepper,* which the natives apply, in the form of plaister, in almost all cases of illness,—when they were startled by the crying of a young child, at some little distance from them. Charles and his companions jumped up, and saying, "Well, we shall see one of the natives at last!" they proceeded in the direction of the voice. In a few minutes they had broken their way

See Mrs. Bowditch's elegant description of "*Plants Anonaceæ*," in the *Magazine of Natural History*, No. 5.

through the brushwood, and found themselves in a pleasant space that had been cleared from bushes. Articles of dress, both male and female, were lying about ; English plates and dishes, containing different kinds of food, were placed on the grass ; bows and arrows were hanging on the branches of the trees ; but that which attracted all the attention of the wanderers was, a kind of hammock, made of gaily painted cotton, slung by silk cords from a low bough near to them, rocking to and fro in the wind, and evidently containing a child. Charles turned, in surprise, to speak to his two attendants, when, at the very moment, a sudden rustling noise, on the other side, startled them, and a young lion sprang past the group, at the swinging hammock ! Nick Trunnel, who seemed never to be taken unawares, rushed after the animal with his cutlass, calling to Clews to do the same, and shouting to young Turret to fire ! Off went the gun, and away dashed our hero to his companions, shrieking, screaming, hallooing, throwing his arms about, and beating the bushes around, as he saw Trunnel and Clews were doing. The lion, in the very act of taking his spring at the hammock,

was startled, wounded, and so much terrified by the unexpected assault of our party, and their noise, that he was fortunately unable to take his aim correctly, or to look round at his pursuers, but bounded off into the distant brakes, leaving the child unhurt, and only frightened at the jerk which he had given its cradle with one of his powerful paws. Charles hastened to the hammock, and found, to his amazement, a black infant, dressed in long, white muslin robes, similar to those which he remembered to have seen his youngest sister wear, two or three years before, when she was a baby. He lifted the little creature from its resting place, and gave it his keys to play with, in order to pacify its cries. Trunnel, who was on the alert and the watch, lest the lion should return, or the natives come among them, in consequence of the late uproar, ran to him, and advised that he should leave the child, and hasten with Clews and himself towards the river, adding,

“ I’m sure we shall have um here, Mr. Turret, Sir ; and I won’t take upon myself to say, that they are friendly niggers in these latitudes ! I think !—Clews !—don’t you hear any one ? ”

Before Clews could reply, a dozen black faces were peeping at them from among the trees; and seeing that they were so few in number, the negroes dashed forward and surrounded them—a number of women followed; and one, who was beautifully dressed in the united fashions of England and her native Africa, broke, screaming, through the crowd, and running wildly up to Charles, she snatched the now happy infant from his arms, and disappeared, with her attendants, through the trees.

Our hero was bewildered and astonished by this sudden adventure; and as the black men wrenched the gun from his hands, and the cutlasses from the hands of Trunnel and Clews, Charles turned a look of wonder and dismay on Nic, which he answered by merely a shake of the head; for our old friend had now met with something that puzzled even him! Resistance was vain; the negroes bound their hands behind them, and drew them along, gabbling to one another in their own language, in the midst of which, their captives heard the words “Frenchmen,” and “slaves,” pronounced plainly in English.

“ Mr. Turret, Sir, this is a baddish bit o’ work ! what’l ever Captain Manly say or do ? ” said Nic.

“ The Nereid will sail without us ; and poor Nan will never know that I was murdered among the niggers, in Africa ! ” exclaimed Clews, sorrowfully.

“ If we could but contrive to make Stud and Pettrel aware of our situation, they might pull away for the ship ; and the captain would easily manage the business for us, I dare say,” replied Charles, keeping up an appearance of cheerfulness, which he did not feel, in order to console his comrades.

In this uncomfortable state of body and mind, they were marched through the forest for about half a mile, then out into the open country, where large fields of maize and rice extended on each side of them. At length they came to a town, where our hero was surprised to observe many appearances of comfort and of wealth. Cottages, too,—English looking cottages—were scattered among the native cane huts. Many of the inhabitants, he also observed, were dressed partly in

articles of the manufactures of his own country. At length they came opposite to an elegant house, equal in tastefulness to any English villa ; and his surprise was now exceedingly increased, for he saw a gentleman, who had his back turned towards him, dismounting from a noble English hunter, whose saddle and bridle were exactly such as his father always used at home. The gentleman gave the horse to a groom, and as he turned round to answer one of the guards, who had gone forward to speak to him, Charles saw that he was as black as a coal. After talking for some time with the attendant, he entered his beautiful house, while our party was conducted round to the back of it, and ushered into a large room, which was detached from the dwelling, and stood inclosed in the pleasure grounds that belonged to it. In a few minutes the same gentleman entered, followed by others ; and having taken their places at the upper end of the room, he, in his own language, desired the person, who seemed to be the chief of those who guarded our party, to come forward, and state the whole affair. The gentleman appeared to be much agitated during the recital ; then

spoke to a person in waiting, who left the room ; but re-entered in a few minutes, with the elegantly dressed black lady, and her attendants ; one of them bearing the child in her arms, which she took to the gentleman, who tenderly kissed it ; and returned it to its nurse. Then turning to Charles, he said, with a severe look. “ Vous êtes Français ? ”* . Our hero eagerly replied, (for he had learned French at school,)

“ Oh non, Monsieur ! Je ne le suis pas, je vous en assure ! *Je suis Anglais !* ”† added he with a raised voice, and proud look.

“ Aye, indeed ! ” replied his questioner, in good English ; “ but that may be a pretence,” continued he, to one of the persons near him. Then, turning again to the youth, he said, “ How am I to know that you are Englishmen ? ”

“ You have my word for it ! I have just told you that I am one ; ” replied Charles indignantly. The smile that now passed over the broad black face of the person in authority, was noticed with a chuckle by old Nic. The gentleman then said,

* You are a Frenchman.

† Oh no, I am not, I assure you. I am an Englishman.

“ I am, I own, pleased with your spirit, young gentleman ; and shall be glad to find that you really belong to a nation that I love so well ; but I must have *proofs* of your truth ; a French slave ship has been noticed for some days past in the river ; and our people have so great a dread of being carried to America, to toil for cruel masters, that they have left the banks, and have all flocked into the towns for protection. This French vessel was seen only yesterday ; and no British ship has been here for the last two months. You were found too, with my infant in your arms ; and no doubt is entertained among any people, that you were carrying him off to the ship, in order to make a slave of him hereafter !” Here the father’s eyes flashed with proud feeling, which he, however, quickly subdued, and proceeded to say,—“ You see how much appearances are against you ; but have you no letters, no papers about you, by which I may judge of your veracity !”

Here Charles fortunately recollected his pocket-book, which, by a mere chance, he happened to have with him. He immediately produced it, saying, “ I am quite innocent of the cruelty

you charge me with ; I found your child alone, and it was saved from the jaws of a lion by my companions and myself. The letters which you will find sealed, I shall be obliged if you will not open ; the others are from my own relations, and those you are welcome to read."

We must now account for the circumstance of this important book being so fortunately with our young friend. On the previous day, just before the storm commenced, he had taken it out of his chest, in order to read over, for the seventh time, those few precious letters, which his parents, grandmother, brothers, sisters, uncle and aunt, had sent to him, while the ship lay off the Isle of Wight, waiting for a fair wind. He was in the midst of his favorite enjoyment,—reading of home,—when the sudden squall came on, which caused the Boatswain to sound his " Pipe all hands !"—and Charles, hastily folding the papers together, hurried on deck : he, being not the most careful person on earth, *or sea*, had omitted to replace the book in safety ; and the consequence was, that he landed with it in his pocket.

Our party watched their judge, as he continued to turn over the letters ; at length he unfolded

one of them, and looking at the signature, exclaimed—

“ Ann Isabella Clarkson ! then what is *your* name ? ”

“ Turret, Sir, Charles Turret.” The gentleman looked disappointed. The direction on one of the sealed packets now attracted his attention, and he was proceeding to open it, when Charles stepped hastily forward, saying,

“ You appear, Sir, to know something of my country, and are likely to have heard, that, to break open a sealed letter, is considered an act unworthy of a gentleman ;—I beg, Sir—”

“ I am only going to read one that is directed ‘ to Prince Bastian Pearce,’ ” replied he with a smile. “ Pray, who wrote the letter to him ; and how came you to be the bearer of it ? ”

“ You can have no right to ask ; but I will not do anything to cause you to show unkindness towards us ; therefore, I inform you, that my grandmother, Mrs. Clarkson, wrote it, and gave it to me, to deliver, in case, by any unforeseen accident, I might be in the Prince’s neighbourhood.”

“ And *being* in his country, why have you not presented it ? ” asked the gentleman, who only seemed waiting this reply to be eased of all his doubts.

“ In his country ? Is it possible ! Ah, true ! on the banks of the river Gambia, Bastian lived ! But how could I know that *this* part of the country belonged to his father ? ” exclaimed Charles, speaking in a bewildered way, partly to himself, and partly to his black interrogator.

“ And pray, my good youth, one more question,” said the evidently delighted man, to our hero, “ And pray, what have you ever heard of this ‘ *Bastian* ? ’ ”

“ That he was sent to England to be educated, that he was for three years with my grandfather, the excellent Mr. Clarkson, at Enterfield, a village about ten miles to the north of London ; that my mother, who was then Miss Isabella Clarkson, liked the young prince much ; that she was his first friend,—that she played to him, and soothed his feelings, on that melancholy night, when he first came to Enterfield, overwhelmed with child-

ish sorrow :—Oh ! I have often listened to my mother and aunt”—

“ What, the little Eliza ! Is she well too ? ” exclaimed King Bastian, for it was indeed he, as tears of pleasing and grateful recollection rolled swiftly down his dusky cheeks : he then continued, “ Kamba, dear Kamba ! welcome that good youth, the only one of his family that I shall ever see, to thank for the care they took of me in my childhood.”

Here he brought his wife forward to the astonished group, and taking her hand, he placed it in one of Charles’s, and shook the other, in a kind and manly way, that won the boy’s heart. Kamba, the Queen (for Bastian’s father had been dead some years), knew the English language far less perfectly than her husband, and indeed she had only acquired it, in order to please him ; but she understood it well, and, in the kindest, and simplest manner, she told him she was very glad to see him, and to find, that he belonged to a nation, and to a family, which her husband loved so much.

“ But,” added she, bringing her infant from its nurse, towards Charles,—“ but, for you save my little Bastian from bery cruel lion, most me bery mush lub you;” and falling on her knees before him, she held the infant up (as she shook with strong feeling, at the recollection of the danger to which her darling had been exposed), and said,

“ Ah, dear, kind English bery good boy! a moder tank you, tousand, tousand time!” She could say no more, but bursting into tears, her husband raised her; and taking her under one arm, and Charles by the other, he led the way to his dwelling, leaving orders that Trunnel and Clews should be well taken care of.

As King Bastian and his two companions passed down the level walks of the garden, shaded from the afternoon sun, by magnificent trees, the queen expressed a wish to be particularly informed of the circumstances in which the youth had found, and rescued her child; and when he had related the adventure, from the time of quitting the ship, the king said,

“ I dare say you wonder that my boy should have been left thus exposed, and without attend-

ants ; the reason is simply this :—Kamba wished to celebrate the child's birthday ; he is a year old to-day, and as it is usual with us to hold our feasts and entertainments in the open air, under the shade of trees, this was the case to-day. Dancing, archery, and other amusements were over ; and refreshments had been handed round, when the party heard my usual signal at a distance, by which they knew that I had returned from hunting, and that we were bringing our spoils with us. The queen arose hastily, and came to meet me, leaving the infant asleep, and, as she supposed, in perfect safety. The guests followed Kamba, and two attendants were left with the prince. As they sat, however, it appears that they heard your voices among the trees, and as you were speaking in a foreign language, they concluded it was a whole ship's company of Frenchmen, coming to seize, carry away, and sell them for slaves. Forgetting the child, they fled, and the rest you know ; and *I know* that I am indebted to you, Charles, for having saved, next to my wife, my greatest treasure ! I love to call you Charles," added the king, after a pause, " it reminds me of your noble uncle ;

you were named after him, I suppose—Is he well?” Our hero assured his royal friend that he had left his kind uncle in health and happiness, about three months before the present time.

The party had now entered an elegant apartment, where African taste was judiciously blended with British decorations. The youth looked around him in pleased astonishment, and could not forbear remarking on the evident pleasure which the king appeared to take, in having every thing about him in the English fashion.

His majesty replied ; “ Yes, I do : my father hoped I should profit by receiving my education in England ; and though unfortunately I did not remain there long enough to perfect my studies, I received so much kindness, saw such excellence in your grandfather, and felt so much admiration for the country, that after my return to Guinea, my whole study, for many years, was to attain a thorough knowledge of every thing connected with your government, laws, commerce, manufactures, history, &c., &c. I do all I can to induce my people to partake of my enthusiasm ; but at present, Charles, I do not succeed to my wishes ; my

reign has been as yet but short, and I have to root out the habits and prejudices of centuries ; still I do not despair ; my son, or, at farthest, *his son*, may see this kingdom in a very different, a very improved state ;—but here are refreshments, which I am sure you must require.”

While partaking of luxuries, in which those of Britain formed the greater part, our *young* hero told the king that he was anxious to return to his ship, for the afternoon was wearing away apace ; and he felt very unwilling to encroach on his captain’s kindness. His new friend applauded the youth’s anxiety ; and proposed to accompany him to the water’s edge ; adding, “ and to-morrow morning you will hear from me.”

On Charles mentioning the damage that the vessel had sustained, and that Captain Manly intended to proceed down the river, in order to get her repaired, the king told him to beg the captain to leave that affair to the management of his people, as, by break of day, every kind of assistance should be given.

To shorten our tale, the youth thanked his friend ; and having explained the situation of the

creek, in which he had left the two men, and the boat, our party proceeded to the spot. Old Nic had gone forward, to apprise his shipmates of their young officer's approach, when our heroes heard his coarse voice shouting—"By the four quarters,* but they've dived; or cut and run; or are swamped; for not a shirt button, nor a boat plank, is here."

It was even so. The men had heard, afar off, the firing, and the noise that took place at the lion adventure; and supposing that their officer and messmates were either killed or taken prisoners by the natives, they pushed the boat off, and rowed away to the ship, giving such an exaggerated account of the affair, that Captain Manly supposed the shores to be inhabited by a race of cruel and treacherous negroes. He consulted with his officers; and poor Frank Stephens (who was in terror for the fate of his friend Turret) had just obtained the command of a well armed party from the vessel to go and ascertain the fate of our wanderers, when, in the dim evening light, a boat was observed

* "The four quarters of the globe" he meant; it was his usual exclamation.

approaching the ship from shore. The boatswain hailed her ; and Charles's voice was gladly recognised by his friend. He came, loaded with every kind of present that could be obtained, in the short time that a boat could be procured and manned. Game in abundance, and many novel delicacies, graced the captain's supper table that night, which our hero enlivened with his romantic tale. King Bastian was not unmindful of his promise ; the vessel was repaired at his command, and at his expense : the whole ship's company enjoyed his bounty, during the time of her remaining in the river ; and entertainments were given on shore, to which the officers were invited.

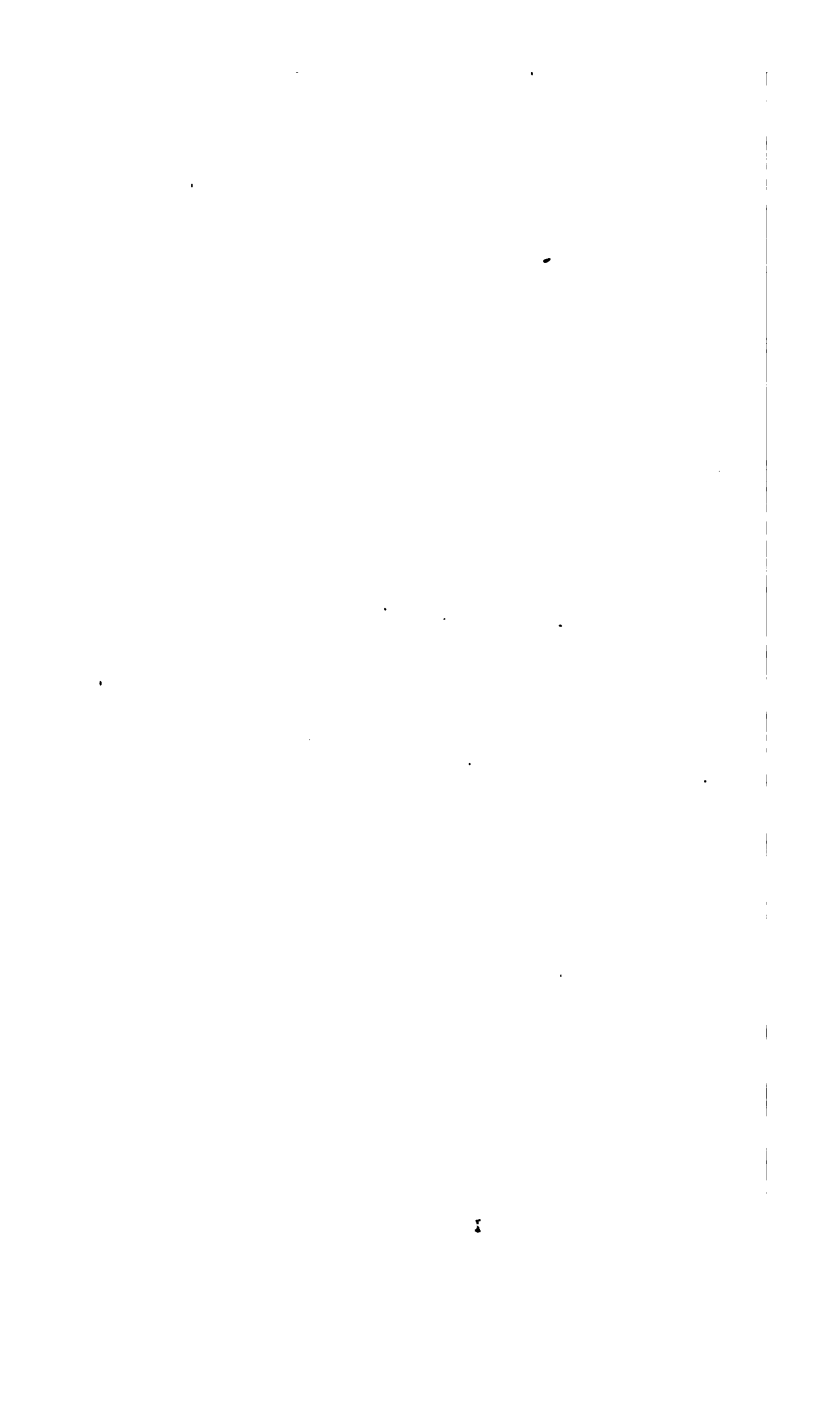
Charles lived almost entirely with the king and queen, and when he parted from them, they presented him with innumerable curiosities, and with every sort of useful and ornamental article that could be devised by the worthy Bastian. He wrote gratefully to Mrs. Clarkson, and affectionately to her family ; with each letter, too, his wife sent some token of her kind feeling towards the relatives of her young favourite, the early friends of her husband.

Young Turret left them with real regret, and promised, that if ever, or whenever, it lay in his power, he would revisit them.

In due time, the ship *Nereid* arrived at Madras, disposed of her cargo, and, after a prosperous voyage home, Charles had again the happiness of finding all his dear friends in health. His account of the reception he met with in Africa, the perusal of the letters, and the delightful "*rummage*" over the gifts and curiosities he had brought, formed an exceeding treat for the whole assembled family. Again, every particular relating to Bastian's residence at Enterfield, was described, and listened to with interest, and Mrs. Clarkson recalled to her daughter's recollection, the remarks made by her benevolent husband, on the probable equality of the negroes with their white brethren.

Charles Turret, when this story closes, had not again visited the river Gambia, but he often thinks of his pleasant adventure on its luxurious shores ; and longs to see once more his kind friend, Bastian, the African King.

FAGGING;
OR,
THE RUNAWAYS.



FAGGING.

“ VINCENT, I can bear this life no longer !
Your persuasions even shall not stop me now ; I’ll
run away to night !—Clean his shoes ! *I clean
shoes !* I, Henry De Florio, demean myself to
brush a fellow’s clothes, and black his dirty boots !
My very heart seems as if it would burst, with
pride and fury, when I think of the mean and
shameful things, which that ill looking tyrant
Calcraft has made me do for him since I have been
at Richester ! *made me ! made ME,* the only son
of General De Florio ! Why, Vincent, I shall
choke I really believe ! In Calcutta I had one

and twenty servants to wait on me—till I came over here, and was made the slave and fag of this skulking Calcraft, I never even saw a shoe cleaned;—and to day, when he kicked me for my awkwardness, if I had happened to have a pistol or dagger in my hand, there's no knowing what I should have done! All the noble blood of my Spanish ancestors seemed gushing through my brain! What *did* I do? What did I say, Vincent, for I am sure I was out of my senses!"

"Why, Harry, you did and said that, which will get you such a thrashing from Calcraft, as you have never yet suffered, for I heard him—"

"*'Suffered,'* Vincent! Do you think then, that I care for the *pain* of his blows? Oh, no! he might hack me to pieces, beat me to a mummy; trample me into the earth,—he should never hear a word of complaint from my lips, nor see an eye-lid quiver; but I feel here, and here, (pressing his hands, as he spoke, first on his breast, and then on his forehead,) that this treatment will break my heart, or drive me mad! Yet such a pitiful scoundrel as Calcraft shall never have the triumph of breaking my heart, however; and I'll keep

myself from the chance of being driven out of my mind, by running away ; yes, I'll be off to night ! No, now, don't try to persuade me out of my resolution ; I am sorry you will not go with me : I think you are a good fellow, Vincent, but you have a mean spirit, or—"

" A *what*, De Florio ?" said Vincent Piercy, interrupting him.

" Mean, only because you submit to be tyrannized over, by a white faced cowardly fellow, who is not half your size, and has not a quarter of your sense. Now did you not tell me that you used to warm Varley's bed for him all last winter, by getting into it, just as you had begun to be comfortable in your own ? And did you not fall asleep in it one night ; and did not that half-starved looking rat, Varley, come up stairs and find you asleep ; and did he not pull you bang out upon the floor, and jump into the warm place himself ? Now, I say, you are mean spirited, to bear such treatment from any one, but especially from such a dried eel's-skin, as Varley !"

" If I am mean, you are not very generous, De Florio, to twit me with my misfortune. You

know I am not as you are; your friends are very rich, mine are only rich enough to keep me here, in order to ensure my being sent to college,* free of expense to them. I have told you, and *you only*, Harry, something of this before; it is to save my mother from sorrow, that I submit as I do; she has no idea of the indignities I have suffered, or I should long ago have left the place. I have borne the ill-usage of my elder school-fellows, much longer than you have, and am become used to it. But at first!—oh, no one can tell,” and here his voice faltered, “no one can imagine what I felt, nor how near my spirit was being crushed, and made despicable!”

“Yes, I can imagine; you see by my feelings that you have not suffered half so much as I have!” exclaimed Henry.

“*You!*—you, De Florio!—Oh I would have given anything to be able to boil over,—and fume, and foam, as you do;—and then to run off to my indulgent aunt, as you intend to do!—Ah no,—I had no such comfort;—my feelings burned

* Vincent Percy was of an honourable, but decayed family; and he was on the foundation at *Richester*.

inwardly ; and with the greater pain, from the certainty I felt that there was no redress, no hope for me :—for, if I had run away, my dear mother and sister, who can now only contrive to appear genteel, would have been burdened with me ; and I should have been cut off from my present fair and honourable prospect of becoming a help, instead of a trouble to them. Indeed, Harry, you are too proud ! It will never hurt you, to know how to clean shoes ;—there is many a nobleman who would do a dirtier job than that ! So long as Calcraft keeps from asking you to do anything that is really mean, that is dishonest,—never mind the rest. Varley once wanted me to swear to a lie for him,”—and here the mild eyes of the placid Vincent Piercy flashed as brightly as the black ones of his Indian friend ;—“ but a lie,” added he, “ not all the Varleys in the world could force from me ! This I told him plainly, and I must own, that since that time, he has treated me better : he was half tipsy on that night of which you speak, or he would not have behaved to me as he did. Do try, Harry, and bear Calcraft’s usage more patiently ; I am sure—”

“ Hold your stupid tongue !” exclaimed our hero, whose passion, the very name of Calcraft, seemed to rouse. “ Hold your stupid tongue *now*, and preach to your parishioners, when you get a living and a pulpit !—I won’t be palavered over ! Do you suppose my father sent me over here to be taught how to black shoes, and toast cheese, and brush clothes, and warm beds, and run of errands, and—”

“ Yes, he did, or you would not have been sent here,—where such elegant acquirements form part of the education of half the young noblemen in the land ! You are only a general’s son, and yet you go off into a blazing passion, because you are made to do that which your superiors in rank do and have done for a hundred years and more !” replied Piercy, who was so anxious to prevent his generous hearted, but too high spirited friend, from leaving the school, that he used arguments of which he was ashamed, in order to induce him to remain.

“ More fools and mean fellows they then ! My father is a Spaniard, and my mother is an American : in neither Spain nor America are the public

schools disgraced by this barbarous custom of fagging ;—I dare say that is the reason I hate this country so,” said De Florio, half smiling for a moment ; but he continued, “ I am confident my father knew no more of it than I did ; or you would never have seen me here ; but then, Vincent, I should not have known you ; and I own it would grieve me very much, if I could think I am never to see you any more, after to-night !—No !—don’t say another word ;”—seeing that his friend was going to speak ;—“ you’ll put me in a passion again ! I tell you, Piercy, I could have learned all this stupid Latin and Greek, (and they have taught me little else during the two long months, since my aunt brought me)—this I could have learned at any trumpery school in Calcutta, without the bother of a seven months’ voyage ; but then, to be sure, at *any* school in Calcutta, I should have had servants to clean my shoes, and so I should have missed the opportunity of acquiring this necessary part of the education of a gentleman ; the ignorant creatures abroad do not consider that the accomplishments of footmen and scullions ought to be learned by the sons of lords, baronets,

and generals ;—but, poor outlandish souls ! they know nothing of the true style in which we youths should be brought up ! When I get back to Calcutta, I'll undertake to put them in the proper way of educating the nobles of the east ; but I'll manage it better than you English people. I'll hire professors to teach them scientifically,—shoe-blacks, cooks, housemaids, chimney-sweepers—all the polite arts and sciences shall be *well* taught."

" Harry, Harry ! how you run on ;—I shall begin to think you are a little mad, if you talk so !"

" Mad !—well, and is it not enough to make one mad to be sent to England, and made an accomplished footman !—But look,—here come those fellows, Darlington and Bracy ; they always put me in mind of a lamb and a lion ; I often wonder that two boys, so very unlike, should be friends."

" Why, Harry, it is fortunate for Darlington that they are so ;—for Bracy's spirit, which no rough treatment can break, helps his poor little friend through his daily misery, and enables him to bear up under his tyrant's cruelty. I think he looks weaker and paler than ever to-day."

“ Why don’t he run away then ? a stupid little fool ! ” exclaimed De Florio.

“ You think of nothing but running away, Harry, as if that remedy would suit every one, as well as you appear to think it will suit you. Where could this poor little fellow run to ? He has no parents ; and his guardian is, and has been so ill for the last five months,—indeed, ever since Darlington came to school,—that the boy cannot even get an answer to his letters when he writes.”

“ Then if he likes he shall go with me to my uncle’s ; my aunt, Lady Dashwood, is a kind creature : she will take care of him, and settle all about him, with his guardian, I know. “ Here, you, Sir ! Darlington ! come here, will you ? ” and the four fags were soon deep in discourse. They were all sitting under the shade of a large tree, in a field which skirted the play-ground ; it was a sultry day, and the dinner bell had not yet rung, when half-a-dozen of their school-fellows came into the field, among whom were Calcraft, Varley, and Robson ; the latter was Darlington’s tyrant, and he no sooner espied the little fellow,

than he called to him to come and "fag out" for them at cricket.

"Tell him how badly your head aches," said Vincent.

"It will be of no use, if I do," replied the unhappy boy.

"Then I'll try. Robson," said Vincent, "Darlington is not well, he has a very bad head-ache."

"Well, what's that to you? are you his doctor, or his patron, or a præfect? Come here, this moment, you little snivelling fool!—you always sham to be ill, when I want you," exclaimed Robson.

"I'll fag out for you, if you like, instead of him," said Vincent.

"Will you? but indeed you're mistaken; for I am going with Calcraft in a boat; and we shall want you and the general to row for us; so come along, Mr. Vincent Piercy, and leave Robson to manage his little stubborn fag as he likes," replied Varley.

"Indeed, I am not stubborn, Varley, I'll come, Robson, direct—"

"Not till he has knocked every tooth down my

throat," said his hardy champion, Bracy, "the lion," as Henry styled him. "You'll take *me* then to fag out, as Piercy is wanted, wo'nt you, Robson? I can run as fast again as Darlington can, that is, when he has a head-ache," added Bracy.

Robson would never have yielded, excepting from selfish motives, so he accepted 'the lion,' who nodded to his little grateful friend, and ran off to the cricket ground. Henry De Florio would fain have staid with the languid boy, to talk over the plan of his escape, but Piercy warned him not to exasperate Calcraft by refusing to row the boat; just at that moment his tyrant called out,—

"Why don't that lazy fellow come?—here, Blacky!—General!—Bounce!—come to me directly!"

"No!—I was coming, but you called me blacky, and I'll not stir for you!—ah, you may hector and look big; but I won't move from this tree," added he, flinging his arms round the bole, and clinging to it with all his strength; as the

enraged Calcraft approached to pull him away. Varley now came running up, saying,

“I’ll help you drag the little turkey-cock !”

But, in an instant, De Florio had sprung up above their heads, and sat securely among the branches. He was naturally light and agile, and his love of climbing had been well practised during his voyage ; so that he was quickly out of reach of his enemies’ hands, as well as of the bats, and balls, and sticks, and stones, with which the three præfects now amused themselves by flinging at him. All the missiles, however, fell harmlessly down, bringing nothing with them but a few leaves, and an occasional horse-chesnut, in its prickly shell. The dinner bell now sounded, and produced a cessation of hostilities ; but not till Calcraft had sworn an oath, that the ‘black rascal’ should repent his impudence.

“I’ll tell you what I’ll do, Varley,” said Calcraft, taking his worthy friend’s arm, as they walked back to the school ; “those early apples are ripe now, that grow in the right hand corner of

the orchard. I'll make Blacky go and steal some for us, to night; we'll let him down from the bedroom window by the sheets, and when he comes back, I'll be revenged on the little proud devil for his insolence this morning! When you go out into the town, to-day, Var., buy me a paper of court-plaister, and as soon as he is asleep to night, we'll cover up his eyes* with it, and then bawl out—'fire! fire!'—in his ears!—That's one punishment;—another shall be, to clean four pairs of boots and shoes to-morrow, instead of one; for I'll smear them all over with mud, on purpose to torment him; he hates above every thing to do that job—a nasty, proud, little black fool!"

"Nay, Cal., he is not black, and he is, I must say, one of the handsomest boys in the school."

"That's it! that makes me hate him so! that is—I mean," added Calcraft, hesitating, for he

* This barbarous trick (substituting wafers for plaister) among twenty other acts of cruelty, the author *knows* to have been practised on a mild and weak spirited boy, at one of our public schools; indeed, his intellects were injured by the worse than slavery—the system of torture to which he was subjected.

saw Varley smile, "he is so vain of his fine eyes, and glossy hair, that I want to break him of such foolishness—I really do it for the boy's good. You may laugh, Var.—but I do indeed; I hate to see such little fellows so stuck up and insolent."

"Ha! ha! ha!—no, no! Cal., that won't do! no!—'pon my life—but that's a good one!—why, we all know, you hate every boy that's good-looking!"

Here they fortunately arrived at the dining-room-door, or the two friends might have parted enemies; for Calcraft's unmeaning sallow face was such a contrast to the noble intelligent countenance of his fag, that the boys used to call them "beauty and the beast." Varley's laugh, therefore, and cutting remark, had angered his friend the more from its very truth. During dinner, he had time to think over, and to cool upon the matter; for Varley was his only "*chum*;" all the other youths disliked his overbearing disposition and ill-temper, too much to remain very intimate with him. Varley was poor and mean; Calcraft was rich and inclined to pay

handsomely for such friendship as he could procure ; hence the league between these two boys.

Evening approached ; new insults were heaped on the irritable De Florio, and fresh torments (or punishments, as his tyrant called them) were invented by Calcraft and Varley, for the devoted boy, when night should arrive. A part of their plotting conversation, however, was overheard by Darlington, as he lay stretched upon a form, resting his aching head upon his arm ; the plan for the apple robbery, in particular, was known to him, and was soon communicated to the indignant Henry, who exclaimed,

“ And can you really stay, Darlington, among such a pack of slave drivers ? An inquisition ought to be started in England, now it is put down in other countries ; these fellows would make admirable familiars ! Well, *will* you go off with me to-night Alfred ? We shall reach St. James’s Square by to-morrow, breakfast time, and I know my aunt will be glad to see you ; Sir Richard, my uncle, will go to your guardian, and—come, there’s a brave fellow,—say, shan’t we start together ? ”

“ Oh, De Florio, I should be glad to go—that is, to get away from these cruel boys, you may be sure; but if your uncle and aunt should not be glad to see me,—and if my guard—”

“ Oh, as there are so many *ifs* in the way, I can't help you over them, and have nothing more to say—there are no *ifs* in *my* plan. I can but offer to take you with me; I have plenty of money left, about seven or eight sovereigns.; so we should not starve on the road for want of supplies—come, this is the last time of asking—decide quickly—“ to go, or not to go?”—don't hesitate, for I want to run and talk to Vincent about writing to him, and about the best way of starting to-night, and fifty other things;—so now, ‘ yea, or nay?’ Ah! — ‘ the ayes have it,’ as your parliament people say. I knew you would consent. We'll run over the fields, and through the wood to Nutsley,—jump on the mail, and then heigh ho for London! I cannot have any more ‘ *ifs*,’—go, and collect any little trifles you may wish to carry with you, and be sure to contrive and stand near me when the names are called over to-night as we go up to bed. I have bribed

the porter to leave the gate unlocked, so we shall easily slip away. There, set off! be quick! be brisk!" and away ran our hero to another part of the playground, where Vincent Piercy was seated, busily learning his Greek verb for the following morning.

The evening was calm and clear; a rich glow in the west still afforded him light enough for his employment, and he looked up kindly on the bright countenance of his friend, as he said,

"Harry, you will not be ready with your Latin to-morrow morning—you do not answer; but I will not believe that you are still resolved to run away."

"Now, none of your preaching, Vin! I'll come and hear you when you are a bishop; but at present, let us settle about our going."

"*Our Harry!*"

"Yes, poor little Darlington is going, you know; why, how you stare! one would suppose I had said his ghost was going; and, between you and me, I think you would have nothing left of him but his ghost in a few weeks, he gets so thin, pale, and ill; but my aunt will soon set him

up,—so now, I say, Vin,” putting his arm round his friend’s neck, “I say, my dear, good, preaching Vin—Bishop Vin!—*do* help me to contrive, will you?”

“But, De Florio——”

“No ‘*buts*,’ if you love me! you have as many ‘*buts*,’ as Darlington has ‘*ifs*,’ and they don’t form any part of my eastern dialect. Well, I’ll tell you first what I have done, and then you shall help me to contrive our escape. This afternoon, then, I gave Wardle, the porter, a sovereign, and he has promised to leave the gate unlocked; so then,—oh, hang that bell for prayers! I have not settled half of my plan.”

However, to prayers they went, and immediately afterwards, the names of all the youths were, as usual, called over; and now came the time for our impatient hero to try and escape; his heart beat quickly, as he twitched Darlington by the sleeve, and then passing the tutor, who stood by the door, the two boys turned to the left, instead of the right, and scampered across the playground. It was a bold, a desperate scheme, and little Darlington often talked of it afterwards with

wonder ; he could scarcely believe that the persuasions of the bold "general" even, had been able to induce him to take so hazardous a step. The truth is, De Florio had hurried, and allowed him no time for deliberation : his friend, Bracy, too, seeing how unsuccessful he was in defending the meek spirited boy from persecution, had rather advised him to accompany De Florio, and trust to the chance of obtaining the forgiveness of his guardian, when he should have heard the boy's story. So it was : however, the most courageous and the most timid youth in the school, were now running over the ground together, in the certainty of finding the gate open.

" Ah ! — treachery ! treachery ! " exclaimed Henry, in a passionate whisper. " Rascal, to deceive me so ! the gate is locked !—and, hark—the garden gate is opening, and I hear Dr. Oldform's voice !—back Darling !—run back, we cannot go to-night ; " and in three minutes they were panting up stairs, at the door of their bed-room, in which four others of their school-fellows also slept.

“Stop, Darling, don’t go in yet,” whispered De Florio; “a thought has just struck me!—mind—you shall come down to me in the orchard.”

“I? I be let down out of window to steal apples?—oh, I hope they will not force me to do that!”

“You’ll put me in a passion if you make any idle excuses, and show yourself to be such a little coward!—what’s to hurt you any more than me? *I’ll* do it, as Lord Nelson did, when he was at school, because no one else dare do it; but, like him, I’ll not taste an apple. I can buy apples if I wish for them, and I do not want to learn the way to the gallows. Do you think, ye dull little clod, that I would pick an apple for their mean contemptible maws?—not I, indeed!—but I’ll be let down out of the window with pleasure, and you must come too;—nay, fool, I shall go first: you need not fear to *follow*, sure; I will take care and catch you if you should happen to fall—besides—”

“Well, but De Florio, now don’t be so passionate! I can’t make out why you mean to be let

down into the orchard, and want me to go too, if you do not intend to steal apples?" said Darlington.

"Why, to escape, to be sure! you little stu—but I beg your pardon! I forgot that you could not know my plan!"

Here the room door was opened, and Calcraft rushed out with such violence, as to knock the two boys down. He had become impatient to begin his new tyranny, and was going in search of his high-spirited fag.

"Hang that black phiz of yours! I could not see it! Come in, ye lazy villain, and pull off my boots," exclaimed he, and, to his surprise, the boy, though inwardly enraged, obeyed him. Vincent Piercy was already in bed; and when De Florio had acted the part of laquey to his tyrant, as long as his caprice required, he went to Piercy, and briefly whispered his disappointment, and his determination to escape from the window. Before he had finished talking, however, Calcraft called to him in a haughty tone, and desired him to tie his sheets together by the corners, and fasten one

and round his body ; for they meant him to go and steal apples for them.

“ Very well—but I won’t go alone. I sha’n’t be able to gather the apples, and bring them up with me ; I *will* have a companion.”

“ Find one, then, who will venture, and you may take him, but if no one will hazard his neck, you *shall* go alone ! I owe you two or three good thrashings, and if you offer to disobey me now, your back shall suffer the more for it, that’s all,” replied Calcraft. Henry looked at him with cool contempt, then turned away, and said aloud,

“ Vincent, will you go down with me ?” then whispered him to refuse,—which he did.

“ Will you go, Bracy ?” — but Bracy was asleep.

“ You, I suppose, Darlington, would be afraid to venture ?” It was with difficulty, and with a faltering voice, that the timid boy said,

“ If you will promise, De Florio, to take care of me, while I—”

“ *If ?*—to be sure I will ; so get ready.”

The sheets were knotted, and Henry quickly

fastened one end of them round him ; then whispering Piercy, to see that Darlington was cautiously lowered, and afterwards, either to cut, or to untie the sheets, and let them fall out into the orchard, he shook his friend's hand, hard and affectionately, and springing up on to the high and narrow window sill, he tied the other end of the sheets, in a sailor's knot, to the iron bar of the casement, and lowered himself with admirable skill and courage, while all heads but Darlington's were leaning out, and watching his clever but perilous descent. Safely landed, he untied the linen, bidding his schoolfellows, in a loud whisper, " draw up !" and now came the greatest trial of poor Darlington's courage.

" Oh that I had never consented to go with him, Piercy !" whispered he.

" Well, do not go, then ; but you should have thought of this before ; how shall we let De Florio know ?"

" Oh, then, I will go ; but pray, Piercy, be *sure you see* that they do not play any tricks with me. Good bye !—Yes, I'm coming, Robson !" and the little trembling fellow, apparently more

dead than alive, was thrust out to follow his bold leader; the præfects enjoying the joke, and Piercy watching his descent with anxiety.

“Not that way! that’s not the tree! not that way, I tell ye!” exclaimed Calcraft, as, after a hasty whisper, the two boys snatched up the bundle of sheets (the knots of which Piercy had contrived to untie, unperceived), and were running off in a contrary direction.

“Hallo! the sheets have fallen out!” said Varley, in consternation. How can those fellows get back again? We’re in for a pretty row, however!”

“It was your proposing, Calcraft, now try to think how we shall manage,” added Robson.

“Why, to be sure—tie two more sheets together, and let them down,” replied Calcraft; “but why did blacky pick the others up, and run off with them, away from the right tree?”

“Oh, perhaps he has taken them to put the apples into, and he may have gone to another tree, in a different part of the orchard; but I can’t see either of them, the moon is so low, and is come behind the corner of the wall, so that part of the

Orchard is as black as *Avernus*!" replied Varley, trying to be classical.

"It is very strange; they make no noise: I don't hear the boughs shaking, do you, Varley? Blacky climbs like a cat though; and perhaps he is afraid to shake the tree, for fear of being heard; so I suppose he will gather the apples: Hark! I heard a bough break"—

"And Blacky will fall,
And down come sheets, and apples and all;"

said Robson, interrupting Calcraft.

"Hush, ye fool! let's listen! Call them softly, Cal! I don't hear the least noise," said Varley.

"De Florio! Darlington! why do you stay so long? Dr. Oldform is coming! he'll be in the orchard in a minute! Come along! you've gathered enough; and we've let down more sheets!" said Calcraft, in a loud whisper.—No answer.

"Where *can* they be?" exclaimed Varley, adding, "Vincent Piercy, you don't say a word: De Florio was whispering to you just before he went; what do you know about this queer business?"

But Piercy, instead of answering, suddenly

darted from them, and ran down stairs, not choosing to risk a quarrel, to utter a falsehood, nor to betray his friend's scheme, although he could not approve of it. When he returned to the sleeping room, the window was still open, but the three boys had gone to bed.

"Well, have you heard any thing of them, Vin?" said Varley.

"Not a word, and no one appears to know any thing of the matter," replied he, and thus the affair rested.

Our active and energetic hero, meanwhile, had taken up the sheets and run across the orchard, bidding his companion "come along." A high wall surrounded the orchard, and Henry remembered to have noticed, while he was walking in the next field, that a fine apple-tree grew near the wall, on the opposite side: to this spot then he directed their steps; but when he arrived at the tree, he found, to his dismay, that there was no branch, strong enough to bear his weight, within a foot of the wall. He sprang up the tree, and crawled along the stoutest limb, to try how far it would support him, and found, that by a great

exertion, such, indeed, as few besides himself would have thought of for a moment, he might leap from it, to the broad coping stones on the top of the wall ; so, calling softly to Darlington, he bid him roll the sheets up into a ball, and throw them up to him. The trembling boy did as he was told, wondering what his friend could possibly intend to do with them ; he dared not ask, lest he should be overheard ; he knew, too, De Florio's hasty temper, and did not wish to tease him, while he was exerting himself for their escape. The sheets were now made secure, by one end of them being tied to the bough, the other end of which he flung on to the wall, then, leaning down from the tree, Harry said,

“ You can climb of course, so up with you ; I'll help you along this branch, and then I'll tell you what to do next.”

Poor Darlington ! He had been all his life a delicate and indulged child, and climbing trees had been considered far too dangerous a pastime for the petted son of an anxious and ailing mother ; her death, which had happened but eight months before this period, might have set her son

free to acquire hardy sports, had not grief for her loss almost solely occupied his mind, and he now confessed that he did not believe he could get up the tree.

De Florio was astonished, almost angry, but his better nature conquered; so sliding down in an instant from overhead, he stood by Darlington's side, and said,

“ Now, then, my boy, I'll teach you; jump up on my shoulders, as I stand against the trunk of the tree; you can do that, very well, only try and be a little quicker; now reach up to the lower branch,—that's it! now, while I support your back, fling your feet up, and cling with them round the bough; stay, hold tight, while I come up, and I'll have you up in a moment; there, I told ye so! now crawl along a little way, let me go first though, because I must leap on to the wall, that I——”

“ On to the wall? from this bough leap on to the top of that wall? Oh, it's quite foolish, it is madness to attempt such a thing!” exclaimed the amazed boy. The words, however, were scarcely uttered, before De Florio had sprung like a pan-

ther from the bough, which shook so much with his exertion, as almost to dislodge his companion from his seat. A few slender boughs and twigs were all that touched the wall ; and to these feeble helps did our hero trust for protection to catch at, and to break his fall, if he should miss his aim ! On the parapet, however, he now stood, and immediately proceeded to lower the other end of the sheets over the outer side of the wall, then descending, by their assistance, he again rocked Darlington on his ‘perch,’ with so much violence, that he had nearly screamed with alarm.

A crooked willow stump, on which Harry had often sat, fortunately grew close to the spot, in the field, and to this firm old friend, he strained and made fast the sheets ; then scrambling up them, he was in another moment on the wall again, and encouraging his timid friend to venture along this singular bridge.

“Come, Darlington,” said he, “try your skill—’tis quite safe—never mind the boughs shaking—’tis as steady as a board—as tight as a drum ; come, reach me your hand—nay, don’t hesitate, you sha’n’t fall—courage ! remember, ‘ what man

has done, man may do,' as the copy-books say. That's right, one more effort, and you will be with me on the wall! Very well, indeed, only that jerk has snapped the branch which you held; I hope it will not betray us! what a crack it gave! I wonder what Mr. Calcraft is thinking about just now? That's right, hold tight by the sheets, now you are safe!"

Poor Darlington, though encouraged by his fearless companion, reached the ground in a dream-like state of terror, that took from him all power of speech; his senses seemed wound up to an unnatural pitch—his escape had been so suddenly arranged, and (to his feelings) so frightfully accomplished, that he could not believe himself awake and outside of the orchard. His cheeks burnt painfully, while his feet felt as if numbed with cold; his teeth chattered, and his hair seemed as if it was upright, and moving upon his head. He spoke no word, but ran, when bidden to do so, with a speed, and a strength, that appeared to be not his own. Fields, ditches, gates, and hedges, were crossed in rapid succession, and the boys did not slacken their speed, till the edge of a wood

stopped them. Up the bank they bounded, and away dashed De Florio, into a bye path, which he remembered to have seen before, from the circumstance of a curiously stunted elm, which threw its deformed arms across the track.

“On—on, my boy; in a quarter of an hour we shall reach Gilbert Wattle’s cottage, in the wood;—don’t you know it? I am not very partial to old Wattle, but poor Becky, his wife, is a good creature! I wonder how her fever is! Did I ever tell you of her kindness to me, when I ran that monstrous thorn into my foot, a few weeks ago, as I was walking hereabouts? I went to see her, on our next holiday; but the poor old soul was very ill with a fever, and I have never been able to go near them since: but you must not slacken your speed.”

“How silent he is,” thought Harry—“perhaps he is tired; he is but a poor little creature, and is not used to run so much; I’ll stop a minute, and let him recover his breath.” De Florio accordingly stopped, telling his companion to do so too; when he saw him instantly stagger, and fall against a tree.

“Hollo ! what’s the matter ?—have you run a thorn in your foot ?” But the boy neither spoke nor moved ; and when De Florio ran to him, he found that he had fainted. For a moment, our hero appeared to be overwhelmed with this unexpected circumstance ; and almost repented that he had induced such a timid little fellow to accompany him : but the selfish thought passed away in a moment, never to return. Indeed, he felt that the very thought was unjust towards the helpless boy, who became from that moment a dear and valued friend. Until now, he had only liked and pitied him,—henceforth he was an object of affection. Henry raised the slender youth, and drew him into an opening, where the moon was shining serenely among the boughs ; and as the pale glare fell on his companion’s thin and delicate face, De Florio thought he had never seen a marble statue more white and still. He laid the poor lad gently down ; and hearing the tinkling of water at a little distance, he made his way to the

“Hidden brook, that to the sleepy woods, all night,
Singeth a quiet tune.”

He stooped, and cooling his hot hands in the

stream, filled them, and running back to his friend, threw the water in his face, saying,

“Alfred ! my poor Alfred, what can I do for you ?” He kneeled down, rubbing his hands and temples,—then jumped up, and again ran to the brook for more water. In a few minutes longer, the youth stirred and sighed heavily, and Harry’s efforts to restore him were renewed. At length he was able to speak and to raise himself ; but his words were wild, and he was so weak, that De Florio almost carried him along the path, till they came out into the space, which had been cleared from wood, to admit Gilbert Wattle’s house and little garden.

Harry pushed open the wicket gate with his foot ; and, still supporting his friend, he knocked with his knuckles on the cottage door. The old man and woman had gone to bed, and the knocking was obliged to be repeated several times, before a heavy lumbering noise, up stairs, convinced Harry that he was heard. The little casement was now opened ; and Gilbert’s voice, which shook as much from fear as age, inquired who they were, and what their business was, at that

late hour : (for although scarcely ten o'clock, it was late to the woodman). De Florio knew it would be useless to mention his name, as the *old* couple did not know it : he therefore said,

"It is the boy to whom your wife was so kind a few weeks ago. Don't you remember the long thorn which she drew out of my foot? You stuck it on the blank leaf of your bible ; for you said it was quite a curiosity—you had never seen so long a thorn. How is your wife, Gilbert? is her fever better?"

"Ah, now I do know for sartain who it be!" exclaimed the old man.

"Ah! and so did I know his sweet voice, before ever he had spoke six words! how glad I be,—no matter for the time o'night,—how glad I be that ye be come again, that I may thank you for the bright golden sovereign, as you left with my old man to buy doctor's stuff with for me. God bless your bootiful black eyes—they sparkles in the moonlight, jist for all the worl as if they was two of the stars from the blessed Heavens, and—"

"Well but, Becky! I can't get a word in for the life of me!—Becky!—do listen! come down

will ye—and let me in: I have a young friend here, who is not well, and I *must* bring him in, and have him taken care of,” said Henry, earnestly.

“*Must!*” exclaimed Gilbert, “umph!—that’s an odd word for an Englishman to hear, too!”

“An Englishman!” exclaimed Becky, “pooh! a faggotman you mean; who are you, I should like to know, to be uncivil to the young gentleman!” adding, with a whisper, as she drew in her head, “he’ll pay you well, ye proud old fool; for I know it’s the money you’re thinking about all the while.”

Becky had *hitched* on her old blue gown, while she said this; and was now striking a light with a vigor that shook her cap border, like an ague fit; her blows seemed almost capable of producing sparks from sponge, “let alone” flint and steel. So, in half a minute, the grumbling old man was again left in darkness, and the shuffling of Becky Wattle’s feet along the sanded floor of the kitchen, cheered poor Henry’s heart, as he leaned against the wall, with his almost lifeless friend resting on his shoulder. The

slight fastening being removed, the door opened, and Becky set the swaling candle down on a rush chair, while she promptly assisted Harry to bring in Alfred.

“Lawk-a-day! but the poor child is in a swound!” exclaimed Becky,

“He is indeed! will your husband let him be laid on your bed, do you think?”

“*Let him!* I’d just like to see him refuse! but Gilbert is only a little queer tempered; he’s not sich a cannibal as to refuse the dear lamb a trifling favor like this!” she replied. So Becky and Henry carried the feeble boy up stairs: and old Wattle, who had overheard the whole of his wife’s speech, suffered them to lay their burden on the bed, without any other notice of them than a low muttering kind of growl, as he left the room, and prepared to take his night’s rest in an old arm chair in the kitchen.

“How ill he looks, surely! he’s got the fever very bad, for his hands burn, like any fire coal. Gilbert had better go for the doctor, had’n’t he, Mister? or shall I give him a drink of *yerb tay*, (herb tea). I took nothing else, when I was

bad," said Becky, as she stood on one side of the bed, and Harry sat on the other, holding one of Alfred's burning hands.

"Really, Becky, I am so grieved, and so puzzled, that I cannot tell what we had better do! I'm sure we *ought* to send for the doctor; but,"—and here he checked himself; for he was going to say he dared not.

"How long has he been ill? how far has he come to day? and why is he out so late at night, Sir?" said Becky.

"He has complained of a headache, and has seemed poorly all day; but I did not know he was ill, till I found he had fainted, in the wood, about half an hour ago. We were going to Nutsley to-night, but,"—

"Oh, well, if he has been ailing no longer than you say, I don't believe there'll be any need of a doctor; I'll do the best I can for him, that you may be sure of;—was it only that I might shew my thankfulness to you, young gentleman, for your kindness to me." So saying, Becky hastened away, with the candle, leaving our hero

in darkness, and his mind filled with anxious thoughts for Darlington.

As far as De Florio was a judge, he considered Dame Wattle's treatment of the invalid to be very judicious; and when he found from her, that she was continually applied to, by her poor neighbours from the nearest villages, for advice and simple medicines, whereby she had saved them many and many a "Potheary's bill," his feelings became more tranquil; and having watched Alfred's slumbers for two or three hours, after he had taken Becky's remedy, and finding that he then became calmer, and had fallen into a refreshing sleep, he laid himself gently down by the side of his friend, and was soon in a deep repose.

With the earliest dawn, De Florio was awoke by the laughing note of a woodpecker, in one of the neighbouring trees. His first thought was of Darlington, who still slept quietly; so leaving the bed, our hero went to the little casement, which had been open all night, and leaning out into the bracing morning air, he tried to form a plan for his future proceedings. Alfred's illness

had stopped their intended journey by the mail, which went through the village every night, at half-past ten o'clock; it would be advisable, therefore, Henry thought, to wait at the cottage till evening, and then, if his friend were better, to proceed to Nutsley, as he had intended. Here a deep sigh from the invalid made him start, and withdraw into the little lowly bedroom; and as he watched the sleeper, he could not avoid making some reflections, that would not have discredited an older and a wiser person.

“What a proud fool I am!” said he, half aloud: “I have slept as sweetly on that dingy mean-looking bed, as I ever did under the gilded cornices, and silk hangings, and lace mosquito curtains, in my father’s house! If my parents had been poor, I must have slept every night on such a bed as this. Why should I feel my spirit so hurt, at being made to do the servile things which have so annoyed me? In what am I better than a cottager’s son? And why do I think it mean to do that which more than half of my fellow creatures do every day, and do cheerfully too! As Vincent said, ‘it can never hurt me, to know how

to black shoes.' I have been too hasty! I should have written to my aunt, and told my trouble, and asked her advice, before I resolved to run away! Besides, is it just in me, merely because my pride is up—is it right in me to leave the school, where my friends have placed me, and entice another to leave it too, as if I wanted some one to keep me in countenance! Ah! I never thought of this before! It *does* look cowardly, and I dare say it will be so considered."

Had Darlington awoke at this moment, while De Florio's eyes were sparkling, and his cheeks glowing, with the idea of being called, or thought, a coward; with his mind, too, filled with the above cool and rational thoughts, all would have been well—they would have gone back together to their duty, resolved to suffer their injuries patiently. But as our hero turned again to the window, his thoughts took another view of the subject.

"But they all know," said he, "that I am not a coward; and *I know* that it was pity which made me wish to take poor Alfred out of the power of those slave drivers. What a strange

thing it is, that those præfects should love to **knock** about such a meek little creature as **Darlington** is ! One would think that, as they have **all been fags** themselves, they would wish to spare others from the hardships of fagging ? and that they would take good care not to be hated in their turn, when they come to be præfects ! I remember I **once** heard my mother say, that a slave always **makes** the most cruel master : but I cannot think how that can be ! I know I could never treat even **Calcraft** as he has treated me ! and now, if I were to return to **Richester**, how he would sneer at me, and tell me I was afraid to finish my undertaking ; and I should be made to do things fifty times more **mean** than I ever did ! and I should be laughed at by every one, but **Vincent** ! Ah, and my poor little **Darling**, too ! how **Robson** would hector over him ! and all **Bracy's**, and my efforts, would be of no service to him, and he would become nearly as dull and stupid as poor **Wheatley** is, whom that prize-fighting tyrant of his, **Lord Shuffleborough**, has beaten about, till the poor fellow is all but an idiot ! How dreadful to think that these are boys ;—boys who will be men, and who

will then have more power to do ill to their fellow-creatures ; they may become officers in the army, and delight in flogging and slaughter ! or they may be naval officers, and hector and domineer over the sailors ; or they may be judges, and— No, I will *not* go back to that savage Calcraft ; and poor Alfred shall never see Robson's face again ; but directly I get to my uncle's, I'll clean my own shoes. How Thomas, the fat coachman, will stare, and James, the footman, with his white hands ! — but I'll do it ; and when I write to Piercy, I will tell him, that he may find I am not so very proud.”

Here, a noise, in the lower apartment, caught the ear of De Florio, and put an end to his musings. The house door opened, and Gilbert went forth into the wood to work, with his hatchet propped on his shoulder, and his hedging gloves slung over his arm. The quiet of the early morning was, by this little incident, quite broken : the first human being we behold, after the dawn appears, changes the solitude of that mysterious time, at once into the bustle and the usual appearances of day.

Henry now turned round, for the sleeping room door creaked on its hinges, and Becky, on tiptoe, came in to see if the youths were awake. She watched the sleeper, with her finger on her lips; his rapid, but more tranquil breathing, convinced her that, though better, he was far from well; so telling our hero that she would get something ready for his friend to take, when he should awake, she once more left the anxious boy to his thoughts. Alfred soon after opened his eyes, and gazed about the room for many minutes with feverish wonder; and at length, propping himself up on his elbow, he said—

“Where am I? I have not cleaned Robson’s shoes yet! How he’ll beat me! but I could not find the brush. Ah, De Florio! why are we here? What place is it? You should not have asked me to come till I had toasted Robson’s bread, and boiled his eggs. Ah, mamma!” added he, sinking back again on his pillow, “if you could look out from your quiet grave, and see how different the treatment I now receive from every one about me, is from the indulgent kindness I met with at my own dear home! Oh, my mother! my

mother ! gone ! gone ! Can it be ? Shall I *never* see that dear face again ? nor hear her soft voice ? How mournful, yet how sweet, it was, to lean over her as she lay, so weak and pale, on the sofa ! How pleasant to read to her when she was awake : to watch her while she slept ; and to listen to her as she called me her blessed Alfred—her comfort—her companion—her friend ! Oh ! what days of happiness those were ! No wonder I am so wretched at this dreadful school ! Oh !——”

Here his feelings quite overcame him ; and, burying his face in the pillow, he sobbed aloud. De Florio listened to his friend's burst of sorrow, in pitying silence ; then coming towards the bed, and taking the burning hand that lay on the coarse counterpane, he said soothingly,

“ Darlington ! Alfred ! try and recollect yourself. Do not fret so ; one cause of your sorrow, you know, is removed, for you are no longer at the ‘ dreadful school.’ Come, cheer up ; if you get better, we shall set off to-night by the mail ; and to-morrow you will be with my friends. Do, Alfred, try to be more cheerful.”

His young friend, thus kindly spoken to, raised his head, and making a strong effort to overcome his grief, shook Henry's hand, and, smiling, said,

“ How good you are to me, De Florio. I begin to understand where I am now, and to think what a trouble and a hindrance I must have been to you. I am afraid you will fly in a passion with me, or I would beg of you to leave me here, and go on by yourself. There now!—I knew you would be angry; but hear me out before you get into a rage. You know, Henry, that I could remain here while you go to London; and in a few days I should be well enough to follow you; or you could write, and let me know if my guardian will receive me, or whether he insists on my going back to Richester;” and he groaned at the horrid thought of being obliged to return to his late life of slavery.

De Florio would listen no longer; but burst out with, “ And if he were to insist on your going back, you would return, I suppose? No! that you should not, unless they were to kill me before

they got at you. If you stay here, I stay with you, that's all ; and if your guardian should refuse to receive you when we get home ; or, as you say, insist on your returning to this slave-driving place, then—why then, I have a plan in my head ; and never fear but that I shall contrive well. But here comes your nurse with something more, to do you good. How much better he is this morning, isn't he, Becky ?” said our hero, who was anxious that his own opinion of his friend's amendment should be found correct.

“ Yes,—oh yes, master,—he is better ; but a good way from well yet ; however, if he keeps quiet, and drinks this yerb tay, I don't misdoubt but what he'll do very well again soon ; and now, Sir, as the young gentleman has drinkt it, we'll leave him to try and sleep, while you and I go down and have a bit of breakfast : I hears my good man a coming, and he hates to be kept waiting for his meals.” So saying, Becky left the room ; and De Florio, entreating Darlington to keep from thinking of anything that would fret him, shook his hand, and followed the good woman down stairs.

As they sat at their homely breakfast, Gilbert, who had recovered from his sullen fit, said,

“As I were a mending the hedge, handy by the acorn walk, I see Ned Gibbins and Will Hutch; and I asks 'em what brought they out so early this morning? So Will says, says he, ‘Why, we’re looking for somut as you hav’n’t found, I dare swear, Gibby. Dr. Oldform have missed two of his wild flock, and all Richester’s in a combustion about e’m; and we, and the porter, and the masters, and the Doctor hisself, have been out all night, looking for them: they got over the orchard wall.’—‘Well,’ says I, this ‘passes my comprehension, how sheep should be able to get over a wall; besides, I never knowed as the Doctor kept any sheep before.’ So with that, they set up a horse laugh, and asked me who said anything about sheep? So I got hot, and told them they was no sich genuses that they need laugh at me, for it was plain they didn’t know that a flock always meant sheep. So the two big fools only laughed the more, and went away, still looking back and grinning. Well, there I stood, swearing at e’m

till I got in sich a passion that I couldn't tell hardly what I did ; so, like an old fool as I be, I up with my bill-hook, and flung it after 'em ; and i fatkins ! if it had struck either of 'em, it would soon have stopped their hah-hahing. Well, I had to go and find my bill, which had stuck in an oak tree, by the acorn walk ; and look here what I found lying on a clump of coarse grass," drawing, as he spoke, a small, red pocket-book from the breast of his leather jacket.

" Oh, give it me ! let me look at it !—Poor Darlington !—he fell down just there ; how glad he will be—his mother gave him that book," exclaimed De Florio, who had been sadly frightened during the first part of Gilbert's tale, lest the old man should suspect that the two "*sheep*" were Alfred and himself. Becky, whose wits were sharper than her husband's, guessed the truth immediately, but prudently held her tongue, till she could speak to our hero alone ; for she knew that if Gilbert were to be told the affair, and if any reward were to be gained by informing Dr. Oldform, nothing would prevent him from going to Richester for that purpose. When their meal

was ended, and her husband had returned again to his work, Becky said,

“ Them wasn’t sheep, Sir, that got over the orchard wall ! I watched how your color came and went, while my husband were speaking. Now, Sir, hadn’t you better go back to the Doctor, before worse comes of it, and tell him you’ll be good boys, and will never do so no more ?”

“ Nonsense !” exclaimed De Florio, hastily, “ you know nothing about the matter !” then softening his manner, he continued :—“ My good Becky, I shall not attempt to deny that we have run away, but I trust to your kindness not to betray us ; only do not say a word more to me about returning ! You would not like to see me chopped up like Gilbert’s fagots, would you ?”

“ The powers have mercy ! No, Sir !”

“ Well, then, rather than go back, they should chop me as small as mince meat !—that’s all.”

“ Lawk, to think what a speret he have got, surelye !” exclaimed the simple creature, who really seemed to think that the torments of all “ Fox’s martyrs” might be well endured by the courageous looking boy before her. She had her misgivings,

however, that she was doing wrong in hiding the two youths ; and doubtless De Florio saw something of this in her countenance and manner ; so, to interest her woman's nature in their behalf, he told her of all the cruelties which the junior boys were made to suffer by the præfects.

“ Well ! that ever I should live to hear tell of such cannibals ; and some of they young gentlemen be such nice looking creturs too ; I've often seen them at church, and about—for the like of they to treat their schoolfellows so ! why, it's worse than the poor ignorant boys at the free school behave ! Well, I couldn't have believed it ! And what a wicked, mean, old cretur, too, that Dr. Oldform must be, to let sich doings go on in the school, instead of keeping enough footmen, and sich like, to wait on all the young gentlemen ! Surelye the like of this I never heard ! Why, there's scarce any poor labouring man's son would go nighst the charity schools, if they was to be beat about by the big fellows there ; besides, their pride would be finely up to think, that when they expected to be made scholards of, they was obliged to be footmen, which is a thing, you know, Sir,

that many and many poor young men scorns ; they'd almost all rather load a dung-cart, from morning to night, than be anything so low and slavish like as a footman ! and yet to think that at sich a grand school as this, where there's none but squires', and princes', and marquesses', and parsons', and noble dukes', and lords' sons—to think that they should be *made* to do sich dirty lowlived work ! Well, I shall think of this, Sir, the longest day I have to live ! *I* betray you ? poor dear inicint lambs ! I ask you to go back agin to that wicked old Doctor ? No ! I only wish,—so I do,—that every one of the poor souls would just serve him as you have done, Sir ; and then he'd be mighty glad to hire more footmen, and coax you all back again, to be treated like gentlemen !”

How long Becky Wattle's tongue might have continued to run on, in the same strain of vulgar though honest indignation, we know not ; had it not been for the old sow, which, at this instant, she saw had broken bounds, and was grubbing up some favourite cauliflowers in the little garden ; so snatching up the frying-pan, which she had

used to fry a savoury mess of potatoes and bacon for breakfast, she sallied out and began flacking the fat sides of her old torment with such vigor, that the creature was glad to flee before that fierce-looking cap border, and fluttering blue gown, which followed it to its sty.

“ A nasty tiresome old toad ! what a dance she do lead me every day ! but she sha’n’t live another week, I’m resolved ! ” exclaimed the incensed dame, as she returned to the kitchen. De Florio was gone ; he had seen a sight beyond the garden paling that had sent him terrified up stairs ; he ran to the little window of the bedroom, and peeping from behind its green checked curtain, watched the approach of a man and a dog, both too well known to him—Wardle, the treacherous porter, and Dr. Oldform’s beautiful pointer, Diana ; the animal was an especial favourite with Henry, and she came sniffing along the garden walk as if she scented her friend.

“ Good morning to you, Dame Wattle ! ” said the man, as Becky, who did not observe him, was signing the death warrant of old Bess, the wandering sow.

“What’s here? Get out, ye nasty beast, with yer draggled tail! Where did you come from? Ah, *you* shall have a good bang with the frying-pan next; get out, I say!” added she, chasing Diana round the kitchen to the door; and there first seeing the porter, she said—

“Lawk-a-day, Mr. Wardle! be it you? and if this beant poor Di! well, I thought it were a strange dog, she be so dabbled and dirty. Good morning to you, Sir! walk in, do, and sit down,”—dusting a chair, by long habit, as she spoke, from which De Florio had just risen. “Will ye eat some breakfast, Mr. Wardle? ye’r kindly welcome, I’m sure.” Henry’s absence was now first noticed by the good woman; and the danger of this visitor, to her two young guests, struck her with alarm.

“Thank ye, Dame, thank ye! I stood laughing as I passed, to see how you paid off the old sow. You’ve heard of the row with us, I suppose: two little gemmen off last night? We’ve been out all night, for miles round, after them, and I’m going back, tired enough. Can’t find ’em; but, as I say, what nonsense to suppose that them two

keen uns would be hiding so near the old den ; no, no, says I, they're half way to London by this time. Y—a—a—h !—(yawning)—I'm very tired, I know that : I've a good mind to take a nap in Gibby's arm chair, Dame, with your leave.—Lie down, Di ! what's the fool at ? smelling and whining about the things ! come here, and lie down !”

“ Lawk, if she an't going up stairs, Mr. Wattle !—call her back, or I'll knock her head off with the poker !—dirtying the floor, and now going to “*smaum*” the stairs that I scoured but yesterday,” exclaimed Becky ; who felt sure that the dog had scented De Florio, and would soon discover all. The sagacious animal began to obey—then stopped and looked wistfully at the stairs ;—then ran to Wardle, and again turned to go up into the bedroom : which movement, Becky no sooner observed, than starting up, she seized the elegant Diana by the back of the neck, and dragging her towards the garden, sent her out with an inglorious thrust, and shut the door.

“ Aye, that's right, Dame—she's a famous cretur, too ;—I never see a better pointer ; her scent's as sharp as a needle”—(“ it is, indeed !”

thought Becky). "Well, as your loaf and cheese an't put away—and as I am very hungry, as well as tired, and wet with the dew,—there was a monstrous heavy dew last night;—and as you are so good as to ask me, Dame, I don't care if I do take a mouthful," seizing the knife and bread as he spoke, and cutting off a slice, that proved the statement of his hunger to be quite true.

"I didn't meet Gilbert"—("that's well," thought Becky;) "but," continued Wardle, speaking with his mouth full—"what have you got here, Dame?" taking up Darlington's pocket-book, which De Florio, in his haste, had forgotten.

"That!—oh—that book," said she, hesitating, (for she was taken by surprise)—"why, it were found by my husband this morning: is it your's, Mr. Wardle?"

"No, but it belongs to one of our little runaways—look here—'Alfred Darlington,—the gift of his affectionate mother,' is written in it. Where did Gibby find it? This shows that they came through the wood: I wonder you neither saw nor heard anything of them."

"Well, now you remind me, I *did* hear a noise after we had gone to bed; but who was to get up at that time of night, you know?"

"True,—to be sure;—who, indeed! but this book must go to Dr. Oldform." Here a sort of groan startled Becky and Wardle.

"What's that?" said the man.

"Lawk, what a noise that dog do make!" exclaimed Becky, in alarm; so rising, and going to the door, she said to the dog,

"Get along with ye, do,—scratching and whining!"

"That didn't sound like Di's noise, Dame; but, I suppose it could be nothing else."

"What else should it be, Mr. Wardle? But come, you've had not a drop of beer to wash down your bread and cheese—I likes a little coffee, for my part,—it's so cheap to what tea is; but my good man always has a drop of beer to his breakfast; indeed, Squire Richards, as owns these woods, allows us two gallons a week."

"Thank ye—it goes down finely this morning, after my long walk. I thought I was an early visitor; but I see you have had one before me,—

for here are two dirty cups, besides Gilbert's pint mug."

"Visitor?—a likely thing, hah, before this time in the morning! Who do you think would take the trouble to come all this way to visit me? Visitor, indeed!"

"Well, dame, don't be angry; I'm sure if your coffee is as nice as your ale, it's enough to tempt any one to come and see you, besides the pleasure of a little chat. But really I must make haste and be off, for this pocket-book ought to be in the doctor's hands; so, one more draught of your beer—here's to your good health, and Gilbert's too, Mrs. Wattle. I'll take this bottom crust with me, and eat as I go along. Well, good morning to you;—here, Di, Di," and away he went; the dog following so reluctantly, that Wardle was obliged to entice her with a bit of bread and cheese.

"Thank the blessed powers you be gone!" exclaimed Becky, as she watched him out of sight, then clambered up the steep stairs to the two boys.

"Oh, Dame," said Harry, "we have been lis-

tening to your conversation with Wardle:—didn't you hear a groan? well, it was poor Darlington: when he found that his pocket-book was gone, he cried out so, that I thought to a certainty we should be discovered."

"Oh, Dame—Dame! I would rather have lost almost everything I have in the world than that book: my mother gave it me the very day she died! I always carry it in my bosom; I suppose it fell out when I fainted in the wood, and now I dare say I shall never see it again."

Becky offered all the consolation she could think of, and then left the two friends, that she might attend to her household duties.

The day wore away, and at sunset Gilbert returned to the cottage, with a very different countenance and manner from that which he had shewn at breakfast time.

He found the two boys at supper, for Alfred had recovered considerably during the day.

"Beck," said he, "I want to speak with you." She went outside the door into the garden to him, and the friends were soon made aware of their danger from the good woman's replies, which she

persisted in uttering aloud, notwithstanding the continual "*hushings*" of her husband.

"What did the doctor give you for your wise information?" were the first words that startled De Florio.

"Here directly!" was the next alarming speech.

"Wardle, too!—and the dog! What an ill-tempered old fellow you must be, to tell of the poor young gentlemen!—Hark!—I surely hear Dr. Oldform's voice!"

This was quite enough: the boys waited to hear no more—they said not a word, but jumping up softly, ran into the little washhouse at the back of the cottage, and thence out into the yard. De Florio looked around him for a moment, then sprang up upon the quaking thatch of the cowshed, and helped his friend up after him; he now began to scramble over the venerable roof, but the aged covering gave way under him, and he fell through, (carrying with him confusion and dismay—dead fern, decayed straw, and yellow moss), on to the back of the old black cow. Alfred, seeing the accident, avoided the hole; and

crawling along the side beams of the roof, dropped down on the outside, among the rank grass and nettles at the back of the shed ; and before he could recover his feet, the active Harry was by his side. They immediately started off into the wood, as nearly in the direction of Nutsley as De Florio's "organ of locality" could guide him ; and having arrived at the end of their shelter, they crouched down in a deep dry ditch, by the side of the high road, to wait for the mail.

The noises of the village, hard by, gradually died away : a whistling labourer now and then alarmed them by his near footsteps ; and two children, who had been gathering wild strawberries, actually stepped on to the bodies of our terrified heroes, on their way home, and ran screaming along the road, in an agony, at having trodden on "either a ghost, or some body murdered !"

"We shall be found, after all !—get up, Alfred ; those bawling fools will bring all Nutsley out upon us !" said De Florio : so once more they set off—first running along the road, then jumping over a gate into a field, and finally jumping back again, when they heard the welcome rumble of the

mail. The coachman pulled up at Henry's desire, and in three minutes they were rattling away towards London. They were on the outside, the inside of the coach was full; and the night air chilled our poor delicate Alfred. His pocket-handkerchief was tied round his head, as a substitute for a hat; and De Florio folded his own round his friend's throat; his coat too, he would have added, to comfort the invalid, but no persuasions could induce him to put it on.

By seven o'clock on the following morning, the coach stopped at the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly; and here our two friends got down. As they paid the coachman, he said, with a knowing nod of his hat,

“ Well, young uns, you're arter no good, I see! —I shall hear of you again, I dare swear! —To be sure,” continued he, as Henry slid another five shillings into his hand,—“ it's no business of mine; and you need not fear that I shall *peach*.” Then muttered to himself, “ He's a generous handsome little chap, howsever!” as he turned away on his heel, hoisting up his left shoulder, and shoveling a heap of silver into his capacious breeches-pocket.

Darlington's spirits sank lower and lower, now that he was so soon to encounter his guardian's presence; while De Florio's rose, in readiness for any difficulties he might encounter.

"We will be off to my uncle's first, and have a good breakfast, before we go, or send to—what is your guardian's name?"

"Byrely—Dr. Byrely;—he lives in Arlington-street."

"A doctor, is he?—what, a physician?"

"No, a Doctor of Divinity," said Alfred.

"Um!—Well, here's a hatter's shop open;—we will go in and fit ourselves with a hat each: what a fortunate thing it is that I did not lose my purse, Alfred!"

"It is indeed!—I had but two sovereigns in my pocket-book," replied he.

"*Had* you two sovereigns in it?—I saw none; then I'd wager my breakfast, that old Gilbert took them out!—a grumbling, treacherous, crabbed old pollard!" exclaimed Henry.

"I shouldn't wonder, indeed,—but never mind; it will pay Becky for her kind care of me; for——"

"Pooh! he'll never let her see a farthing of

it, you may be sure!" said Henry, interrupting him.

By eight o'clock,—handsomely *hatted*,—the two friends entered St. James's-square. The dull time of the morning,—the silence of the lordly space,—the dreary appearance of the tall windows, with their death-like shutters, all closed,—depressed the spirits of poor Alfred, more and more; while De Florio, who knew the contrast that they would find in the interior of his uncle's magnificent residence, with his aunt's vivacity and kindness,—almost bounded along the pavement, pulling his companion's arm with unconscious violence.

A little shade passed over his face, and his steps became less light, as his eye first rested on the well-known house:—it was closed from top to bottom; the steps looked dirty; no trim housemaid was leaning out of the lower windows, nor sweeping the door-way; no yawning footman, in his morning garb, was lolling against the area railings,—all was silent and desolate. Henry's heart beat thick, as he rushed up the steps, and knocked at the ponderous door, as if he would have waked every sleeper in the square. The portentous noise

did indeed rouse Lady Cartheton's fat poodle, at the next house, and several sleepy servants' heads peeped out from neighbouring windows; but no sound save the hollow echo of his knock, (which seemed to have visited every lofty room in the mansion) replied to de Florio's anxiety. Again, —bang! bang! bang! bang! went the knocker; and Henry stamped with vexation, disappointment, and alarm.

At length, when he had for the third time beaten at the knocker, with the strength of a young giant, and had become half wild at the sight of Darlington's increasing paleness, he heard the bolts slowly withdrawn, and the lock unfastened, of the back kitchen door in the area; he ran to the rails, and looking over, met the harsh and sullen gaze of a half dressed and dirty old woman.

"Isn't Lady Dashwood at home?" exclaimed Henry, impatiently.

"I know nothing of Lady Dashwood, nor of you neither! What do you mean by coming here at this time in the morning, and disturbing quiet people in their beds?" and she was turning to go in.

“Come back, you old fool!” shouted the passionate boy, “I am her nephew, and I *must* see her!”

“Then you must go to France, or may be to Italy, and, so good bye, and a pleasant journey to ye!”

“What a surly wretch!” said Henry, quivering with rage and consternation.

“Can’t you tell me where I can hear of her?” But the old woman had left him to his chagrin, having shut and bolted the door. Darlington would say nothing to add to De Florio’s distress, but he could not conceal his feelings, and stood holding by one of the rails, as white as his shirt collar.

“My poor Alfred!—gone to France!—I must be in a dream! Pinch me, Darlington, that I may know if I am awake, and whether this cruel disappointment be real!” He paused a moment—then exclaimed, “Clamps! Ah, Clamps, my uncle’s bankers! we’ll take a coach, and go to Clamps’—they are sure to know all about this strange journey to France! Come, Alfred!” And away went our eager hero, down the steps,

while his friend followed, dragging his weak limbs along.

At the first coach stand, they took a chariot, and were driven to the bankers'. As they drew up, they saw a boy cleaning the brass plate on the door. Henry jumped out, saying to him,

"I wish to see some one belonging to the house."

"You can't do that then, for this hour or more; banking hours don't begin till ten o'clock," replied the boy.

"But surely some person lives here, who could answer a question," urged Henry. The boy, presuming upon their youth, and plain appearance, answered saucily,

"You can wait, I suppose, as your betters do, every day of their lives."

"I shall not wait to hear any of your impertinence, that you may depend on," added Henry, darting past him into the passage, and knocking at the private entrance door, with such decision, that a footman came clattering up the kitchen stairs as fast as he could run.

"Can I see any person belonging to the bank-

ing-house? I am the nephew of Sir Richard and Lady Dashwood, and I am in haste," exclaimed De Florio, with all his eastern pride glowing in his face.

The brass cleaning boy skulked out of sight, lest he should get into a scrape for his insolence; but he needed not have feared, Henry was proud, too proud to notice him further.

"I'll speak to Mr. Penson," replied the footman, "he is the chief clerk; but, Sir, he never sees any one on business before ten o'clock, and ——"

"Oh, yes, tell him Henry De Florio will feel particularly obliged if Mr. Penson will allow him a few minutes' conversation," replied Henry. The man then begged him to walk in, and being informed that a young friend was waiting in the coach, the footman went to Alfred, and conducted him also into the house. In five minutes, Mr. Penson, a sedate person, in a flowing morning gown, entered the room, with a look of surprise on his face. Henry having apologised for his early intrusion, said,

"I am just come up from the country, to my

uncle's house, in St. James's-square, which I find is shut up; can you give me any intelligence of my aunt?"

"Yes, I can; your friends went abroad, for a few days only, and while they were in Paris, they met with a party, who persuaded them to visit Spain. In consequence, Sir Richard wrote over to Messrs. Clamp, and enclosed a letter for you, which we were directed to forward to Richester. It arrived but last night, and in another hour would have been put in the post. I will fetch it you." So saying, Mr. Penson left the room, and returned in a few minutes with a letter, which De Florio eagerly opened, and read the following lines:

"MY DEAR HENRY,

"I HAVE reproached myself many times, for not having apprised you of our intended trip to Paris; and I am more disposed to regret this circumstance now that our visit will be protracted to four months' duration. The temptation to visit the native country of our ancestors, was too strong to be resisted, particularly as we shall travel with

Lord and Lady Courtly, who are well conversant with the country, and will enable us to enjoy many advantages, which visitors to Spain seldom meet with.

“ We received letters from India, just before we left England, containing some pleasant intelligence, which it will be time enough for you to know when we return. Expect us home early in November. Your uncle desires kind regards to you. The party awaits the conclusion of this letter, which I am therefore obliged to hasten. Farewell, my dear Henry,

“ Be assured that I am,

“ Your affectionate aunt,

“ MADELINA DASHWOOD.”

De Florio drew a deep breath, as he folded this letter carelessly together, then looking at Alfred, he said,

“ We will not detain this gentleman any longer, and I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Penson, for your polite attention to me.”

“ Not at all, young gentleman, not at all; I shall be very happy to forward any letter you

may wish to send to your friends abroad," ringing the bell, as he spoke, for the footman to attend the youths to the door. Henry again thanked him, and they took their leave.

"Where shall I drive to, now, sir?" asked the coachman, as he stood with the door in his hand.

"To Arlington-street," replied Henry.

"Oh, De Florio! must we indeed go to Dr. Byrely's?" exclaimed Alfred, as the man mounted his box.

"To be sure we must, unless we stop and breakfast first at some hotel."

"Oh, no, I could not touch a morsel! Well, as it is to take place, the sooner this meeting with my guardian is over the better, I suppose," said Alfred.

"Yes, I should think so," replied Henry, quietly, for his high spirit seemed very much subdued by his recent disappointment. At Dr. Byrely's, then, they soon stopped. Alfred lay back in the chariot, hiding his face with his hands, as the coachman knocked at the door. An elderly

man servant opened it, and Henry beckoned him to come to the coach.

“ Is Dr. Byrely at home ?”

“ Yes, Sir.”

“ Is he well ?”

“ Why, Sir, he was getting better, but yesterday he heard some bad news from the country, which has quite upset him again, and Dr. Bland was afraid, last night, that the gout would fly to his stomach,” replied the butler, whose eyes, while he spoke, wandered from one youth to the other. De Florio then said,

“ You will not, I hope, think me curious, but can you inform me what the bad news was ?”

“ Why, Sir,” replied the man, drawing closer, and looking still more earnestly at the figure of Alfred, “ his ward, Sir,—you may happen to know him—perhaps you are one of the young gentlemen at Richester—his ward, Sir, has run away from school, and Dr. Oldform has written to know if he is with his guardian, and as Master Alfred might have been here as soon as the letter, my master is very anxious about him, and fears he has come to some mischief, and —”

“ Oh, Jernings !” exclaimed Alfred, suddenly uncovering his face, “ has my guardian been made ill by my folly, and has he spoken kindly about me, and is he anxious for me ?”

“ La, Master Darlington ?—how glad I am you are come : not but what you must expect a terrible passion from my master, but after it’s over, all will be right again, I hope. But do walk in, Sir—pray, alight, master Alfred, and I’ll inform Mrs. Sinkins that you are come.”

He let down the steps, and the two friends entered the house. They were then shown up stairs into the front drawing-room, where a fire was blazing, although it was the month of July ; and breakfast was prepared.

One of the folding doors was ajar, and Jernings whispered them, that the housekeeper, Mrs. Sinkins, was in the other drawing-room, which had been fitted up as a sleeping-room for his master. Jernings drew the door still closer, but the peevish tones of the invalid, who was in bed, were distinctly heard, by the two boys, scolding his attendant, for her carelessness in having hurt his gouty foot with her elbow. She soon came

into the room, and started with surprise when she beheld Darlington. After having made a few inquiries of him, she said,

“Your guardian will do very well now, Sir; indeed I know he is better this morning, he is so dreadfully cross: you must expect a storm of scolding, though, Master Alfred: so you had better prepare for it, and strengthen yourself to bear it, by eating a good breakfast.” The timid boy, however, who was already feverish, and weak, was unable to touch any food; and Mrs. Sinkins saw, that the paleness which she had supposed to be caused by fear of his violent tempered guardian, proceeded in reality from illness. While Henry was asking her a question, they heard Dr. Byrely calling out, “Sinkins, Sinkins!” at the same time ringing a hand bell with all his might. She started up, and hurried into the sleeping apartment.

“Who’s in the next room?” said he; “I heard talking, and it was not Jernings’s voice.”

“Talking, Sir! what, in the drawing-room?”

“Yes, ye baggage! and I will know who it is! Not content with knocking my foot almost off

every time you come near me, but you must introduce people into my house to make a disturbance, and then deny it! I have wanted my chocolate too, this hour and more, and you won't bring it. Why can't that lazy scoundrel Jernings come with it, if you don't choose; or that blundering fool, Susan—any body—only let me have it!—Keep five of ye, and can't get bit nor drop to put into my lips! Open both those doors. That young villain too! keeping me awake all night—if I could but hear of him! Won't you make haste and open those doors? I'll knock you down with my crutch, if you don't! Ye want to stifle me, ye do, ye stony-hearted woman! but I *will* have more air—the room's as hot as a furnace! Open the doors, I say! A little idle runaway! aye, he's kidnapped, or drowned, or gone as a drummer boy, or something bad, no matter what to him, so long as he could but plague me! What!—Eh!—How!—Who's that?" raising himself on his elbow, as he spoke, and staring at his terrified ward, who now came slowly forward, while the purple of the Doctor's face faded away to a dull lead-colour. Then bursting

into a rage, he almost screamed out, "Is that *you*, ye scorpion! Not contented with terrifying me nearly into my coffin, with your pranks, but you must dare to come and laugh over me, before I am put into it! Out of my sight, ye viper! What could your mother be thinking of, to leave me the charge of such a firebrand! What did you run away for? Blasphemy, heresy, and schism? or what other crime? *Something* bad, you must have been guilty of, or you need not have skulked out of school!—Away! out of my sight, ye blot, ye disgrace to your mother's name! —ye—"

"Lord bless me, Sir! the poor child has fainted!" exclaimed Mrs. Sinkins, running forward as Alfred reeled against the bed-post, and fell across the feet of the really kind hearted but passionate old man. He roared tremendously with the pain; but the next minute was saying everything kind to the insensible boy, and giving all manner of contradictory orders respecting his recovery to the housekeeper, who carried him away into the next room.

De Florio now came forward, to vindicate his

friend's honor, and to explain the nature of the case.

"Oh!" exclaimed the testy Doctor, before Henry had got half through the story: "Um!—Ah!—I see! What, you are the little jackanapes, who persuaded my poor ward to run away, are you? I've heard of your rebellious spirit! I'll tell ye what, young Sir, I only wish I was your father, for the next half hour, and this plaguy gout was out of my system—I'd teach you to run away from school! for I'd lay the horsewhip over your stubborn shoulders, till I brought you to your senses!"

"Hear me out, Sir, if you please. I shall not detain you long, while I prove that Alfred has not been at all to blame in this business, and while I inform you, that his ill state of health, and weak spirits, made me offer him to leave the school, where the rough treatment he meets with will soon kill him," said Henry, drawing himself up, and looking proudly down on the old gentleman:

"Indeed! mighty fine, upon my word! And pray who made you a judge of how much ill

treatment he could bear? What business had such a child as you to think at all about the matter; and to take upon yourself the management of my ward—you, who don't know how to guide yourself! Why, young Sir, *I* was brought up at this very school, and you see I was not killed there—no,” muttered he to himself, as a fierce twinge made him screw up his face, “it is this vile gout that will carry me off!” Then raising his voice, and speaking again to our hero, he continued: “And so you think you have taken all blame from that torment yonder; but you are quite mistaken; and your grand scheme will all come to nothing; for off he shall go again to-morrow morning, to the respectable school, from which he has been fool enough to be decoyed. Why, what do you take me for, Sir? that—”

“For a very cruel old man!” said Henry, with a flashing eye, and heightened colour.

“Well, really, young gentleman, you astonish me!” said the Doctor, who, being unaccustomed to contradiction, *really was astonished*, at having to bear it from the youth, who stood so boldly

before him, unmoved by his violent language. Rather more quietly, he continued—"Indeed ! so you think me a cruel man, an *old* man too ! but you will have greater cause to think me cruel, if I order my footman to kick you out of my house !"

"No, Sir, I shall not ; for nothing you can do to *me*, can make me think worse of you than I now do, for your wicked conduct to your dying ward !"

"Eh ! what ! '*dying* ?' "

"Yes, Sir, I have no doubt, that if he be sent back to Richester, you will never see him again—alive !"

"I'll not believe a word of it !" exclaimed the Doctor, with a renewed burst of passion, which was the more violent, in consequence of his having been for a moment subdued and frightened by the firm manner and startling assertion of De Florio—"and the sooner you take yourself away, with your sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, the better !" Here he rang his bell furiously, and Jernings entered.

"Show this youngster the door, and don't let

him come near Master Darlington again!" Henry left the room, a very model of indignation; while the Doctor continued to mutter, "A pretty example he is truly! he is bad enough to corrupt a nation of boys! 'Cruel old man,' indeed! If the lads had been such pickles in my young days, what *would* the world have been by this time? I'll have Dr. Bland though, to see my poor Alfred! Not that I'll ever believe he has been made ill by blacking shoes!—ha! ha! a pretty joke! why in a year or two, he will be a præfect, and have little scrubs to black *his* shoes: but he certainly is poorly—looks very pale—much thinner too—God bless me! I hope he is not seriously ill! Bland shall come directly!" Here he rang his bell again, as if he would have split it, and Jernings, almost breathless, soon appeared.

"Is that young tempter gone yet?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then bid Robert run to Dr. Bland, and say I must see him immediately—immediately, d'ye hear, tell him to say *immediately*!"

"Very well, Sir!" said Jernings, and left the

room. Henry had staid a minute in the drawing-room, to exchange a few kind words with his friend, who had recovered from the faintness which had overpowered him; he then hurried down stairs, saying, hastily, as he left the house,

“ I will call in the evening, to know how Alfred is, Jernings,” and dashed down the steps, in the most unhappy state of mind he had ever experienced.

He made the best of his way to Hyde Park, where he had ridden with his uncle, and driven with his aunt; and in a solitary stroll, gave way to bitter reflections and sorrowful feelings. “ Oh !” exclaimed he, as he threw himself under the trees, by the side of the water, “ what mischief I have occasioned by my rashness and proud spirit ! It is *I* shall be the cause of Alfred’s death ; if I had not made him—Oh, yes, I did make him run away ; if I had not persuaded him to go, he would, in a short time, most likely, have borne his misery more easily, and his health would, perhaps, have improved, when he had been a little longer at Rich-
chester. Now I have done nothing but hurry him into the jaws of that cruel tiger, who will

send him back to be tyrannized over by Robson, and ridiculed by all the boys ; he cannot live long though, I am sure ! As to myself, I am in a pretty situation, it must be confessed ! Suppose I return with Darlington—(and he grew hot as fire with the thought)—I *ought* to go, in order to help him bear up under the trials that I have brought upon him. Indeed, what can I do ? My aunt away—no friends in England ! I would rather be torn to pieces by a jackall, than go back to Richester ; but if Alfred should return, I ought, nay, *I will* !—Hah ! perhaps Dr. Byrely may be persuaded to let Darlington remain at home !—and perhaps I may hear something of this kind, when I call in the evening ; well—and then what is to become of me ?—I know !” exclaimed the energetic boy, starting up ; “ I’ll return to India ! I’ll go home !—Home ! oh, how sweet that sounds !” and down he sank again on the grass, to think over the happiness he had known in his far distant country. The difficulties he must encounter, before he could reach it, his ardent feelings scarcely dwelled on for a minute ; and he continued to lie in his pleasant bower, watching the light clouds

as they sailed over the trees, listening to the breeze in the leaves around him, and to the "distant hum of men" in the great city; with his thoughts at the same time far, far away, until he fancied himself among the luxurious bowers of his father's pleasure grounds in Calcutta. Want of sleep during the preceding night, with the solitude of his situation—for as yet no loungers were abroad in the park—conspired to induce a drowsiness, which quickly stole over his senses, and converted the real troubles of his present life into dreams of happiness. An hour or two had passed, unheeded by the sleeper, when he was aroused by a sudden jerk, and the noise of rapid footsteps brushing over the grass. He raised himself, and saw two boys running away, towards the drive, with the utmost speed. The pockets of his trousers were turned inside out, and his leather purse was gone. The jerk had been caused by the snap catching to the lining of his pocket, as it was drawn out.

To follow the lads was Henry's first impulse; but they had gained so much time, owing to his sleepiness, that he feared he should lose sight of them; he jumped up, however, and ran after them over the

turf, with the speed of a hare; one of them looked back, saw him coming, and prepared to dash across the road, just as a party of ladies and gentlemen, on horseback, came galloping by. The boy's foot slipped—he fell close to the feet of a noble animal, on which sat an elegant young lady; the creature reared, and leaped over him, while a gentleman, who saw the lady and the lad, exclaimed :

“Good Heavens ! Emily ! Miss Piercy ! what an escape ! How admirably you sat that leap !—the boy, too, unhurt !” De Florio had come up, and was collaring the young thief, just as he heard the fair rider's name mentioned ; he looked up, and saw at once, by the likeness she bore to his friend Vincent, that she must be the sister of whom he was so fond. The party now collected round our hero and the struggling boy ; and one or two of them inquired the cause of Henry's anger : it was soon told, and the young villain was made to restore the purse.

“What a noble countenance that youth has, Colonel Clinton !” said Miss Piercy. Henry started at the name, and looking full at the gentleman,

they recognised each other as having been fellow-passengers from India, on board the Memnon.

“ This is most fortunate ! ” exclaimed the colonel, guiding his horse to De Florio’s side ; “ for it will enable me to return some property to my young friend, which I should otherwise never have been able to do.” Henry smiled ; for he well remembered that Colonel Clinton referred to a small, Indian, embroidered purse, filled with silver and gold rupees. De Florio had been so well (too well) supplied with money, when he left home, that he had bestowed it in the most prodigal and injudicious manner during his voyage. When the ship arrived at Portsmouth, he was making parting presents to the sailors of the Memnon, who were all collected round him, when Colonel Clinton happened to come on deck, and regretting that the youth should part with his money so lavishly, ran up to the group, and leaning over one of the men, playfully snatched the purse from Henry’s careless fingers, and hastened into the cabin with it, saying, he did not see why *he* should not have some money as well as others.

In a few minutes, a boat came along-side the

vessel, containing Sir Richard and Lady Dashwood, to fetch their nephew ; and the incident of the purse was forgotten.

Miss Piercy, finding that her friend was acquainted with the noble youth, whom she had so much admired, politely requested he would return with them to dinner, saying, her mother would be very happy to welcome him. Henry thanked her for her kindness, but hesitated to accept the invitation ; which the colonel observing, he said—

“ You must comply with this lady’s request, or call on me this evening in Portman-square, or give me your address, that I may be enabled to return the rupees.”

“ Thank you, colonel ; but we must find yet another way, for I believe I am going out of town to-night.”

“ Well, then, I can send the purse according to your address.”

“ We are still ‘ at fault.’ I *have* no address in London, for my aunt is abroad.”

“ Then where *shall* I find you ?” asked the colonel. Henry was silent. Miss Piercy then said,

“ If Mr. De Florio cannot give us the pleasure of his company to dinner, he will not surely refuse to return with us to Clarges-street; in the meantime, colonel, you could send for this purse to our house immediately, could you not ?”

“ An admirable thought, Emily,” and turning on his horse, Colonel Clinton beckoned to his footman, who was waiting outside of the park, and desired him to hasten to Portman-square, and bring his Indian desk to Clarges-street. The man went, and our party left the park, the gentleman and lady walking their horses by the side of De Florio. In the course of conversation, Richester was mentioned, and Emily reminded the colonel of his promise to accompany her mother and herself to Richester on the following Tuesday, to see her brother Vincent. Here our hero looked up in Miss Piercy’s face, with so much meaning in his own intelligent countenance, that she involuntarily said,

“ Do you know my brother, Mr. De Florio ?”

“ I do, indeed, Miss Piercy, know him to be one of the truest hearted boys in the world ! He is my most intimate friend, and if you will allow

me, while I am at your house, I will write to him, and you will be, perhaps, kind enough to take the letter with you."

The young lady readily promised, and De Florio became silent; his ingenuous nature was pained at the mystery that was about him, and which he felt his companions must notice.

To hasten our tale, however, De Florio was prevailed on to pass the day with his new friends, and received his purse of rupees, with a feeling of joy that he never supposed the receipt of money could afford him; but he had suddenly learned the value of it, and knew that if he were going out to India, he could not provide himself with requisites for the voyage without money. Towards six o'clock, he took leave of his friends, and hastened to Arlington-street, to inquire after Alfred's health. Jernings informed him, that Dr. Bland had seen the youth twice in the course of six hours, and thought that his illness would terminate in a nervous fever. The doctor had also given it as his decided opinion, that his patient would not be in a fit state to return to school for six months, if at all, adding, "public schools may

do very well for boys with strong constitutions and iron nerves, but not for youths whose nerves are so finely strung as those of Master Darlington."

"This was Dr. Bland's own expression, Sir, for I heard all he said to my master; and so, Sir," continued Jernings, "I rather think that Master Darlington will have a private tutor at home, when he gets well."

After having heard this good news, making many kind inquiries respecting Alfred, and desiring the man would remember to give his kind regards to the suffering boy, De Florio bade Jernings good evening, and, with a light heart, and eager spirit, he dashed off towards the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly, to wait for the Portsmouth mail, which he knew would soon be there.

Once more, then, our adventurous young hero took his seat on the roof of a coach, and nothing occurring worthy of remark on his journey, he arrived safely at Portsmouth on the following day. He soon strolled down to the water side, to make the necessary inquiries respecting a vessel outward

bound ; and as he was looking with delight at that ocean which he loved so well, he saw, at a few feet distance, a tall sailor, whom he thought he remembered. The man stood lolling against a post, apparently without an idea beyond the enjoyment of puffing away at a favourite pipe. Henry got to leeward of the cloud of smoke, that, curling round the sailor's head, hung in the calm evening air ; and, to our hero's satisfaction, he soon recognised Ben Careen, one of the crew of the Memnon, and his particular favourite.

“ Ah, Ben, how do you do ? I am very glad indeed to see you again ! ” exclaimed he, going up to the man, and seizing his hard hand, which he withdrew from his breast, to meet the offered hearty shake.

“ What, my little nabob !—my golden shower !—my prince of generosity !—is it you ? Well, I never thought the gales would blow your bright curls athwart my glims again ! Look here, my Indian King ! Do you remember the shoal of rupees, that you skymed into my Scotch cap, for lark, the day we crossed the line ? and the watch key and seal that you sent along with um for

company? Well, all the rupees but one went, ye see, in less than a dog watch* after I got ashore; so, finding them flying away like a flock of dab-chicks, I gets a hole punched in this un, d'ye see, and hangs him round my neck;" opening his striped shirt as he spoke, and showing the rupee, dangling in the middle of the tanned mark, which the sun had caused on his breast. "And here," he continued, "be the key and the seal, lashed to as tight a little going thing of a watch as you'd wish to see."

"Well, Ben, I am very glad you are well, and that you have not forgotten me; but I want to get back to Calcutta as soon as possible,—can you help me? Is the Memnon afloat again?—How is it you are ashore, and where is Captain Mannering?"

"Why, first, Sir,—though I'm well now, I was ill when the Memnon hove out o' port; so Captain Mannering couldn't take me; but he left '*strong testimonials*,' as he called the papers, in my favour,

* The dog watch is the short watch which is kept alternately with the regular watch. The former lasts two hours only; the latter is of four hours, duration.

with his cousin, Captain Clear, of the Barque *Flirt*, a free trader ;—yonder she lies,—that's she, with her lanyard loose ; we only waits for the wind to chop about from this queer-tempered SSW, where it seems to be braced and chained ; I think, for my part, it an't veered the vallee of half a point for the last fortnight ; however, I shan't be sorry we've waited so long, if so be you are going out with us."

"Why, Ben, that is the very thing I want to talk to you about : *you* know my father, General De Florio, but Captain Clear does not ; so he, of course, will not take me as a passenger, with only my bare word that he shall be paid when we reach Calcutta : I know you won't betray me, Ben—but I've run away from school, and my uncle and aunt,—you saw them too, Ben,—well, they are in Spain ; and I have not enough money to pay for my passage, and to buy requisites for my voyage besides ; for you know I must get an out-fit."

"Well, but this is bad news, master ! The *Flirt* is the only thing going to Calcutta for months ; I am feared, too, about Captain Clear ;

he's a good sailor,—but as near,—he's as near as sailing in the wind's eye! They say he's took in two ladies shamefully, about the price of their passage, and—”

“Then I'll go as cabin boy!” exclaimed Henry, with a struggle to keep down his pride; for of the two evils,—that of staying to be forced back to his Richester slavery, and that of doing the drudgery of a cabin boy,—he preferred the latter.

“No, Sir!” said Ben, musing, “nor you can't do that, neither; we have our complement, and there's no room for another soul!” Henry seemed reduced to despair—exclaiming—

“Oh Ben! Ben! what shall I do? can't you smuggle me into the ship?—*do* try and think of some plan, will ye?”

“I would, I'm sure, with all my heart, master, but I *dare not* smuggle you aboard. But here comes my Ann: we was to have been married before now, but her mother thinks we had better wait till I come home again. An't she a pretty, good-tempered looking little lass, Sir?”

“She is, indeed,” replied Henry, “and she will

help me if she can, I know," muttered he to **himself**.

"How long shall you be before you go aboard, **Ben**?" said De Florio.

"I only waits for a messmate who is ashore, buying something for the captain; in an hour's time we shall put off, I dare say. My Anne's mother, Sally Hacket, lives at that low house with the green shutters, Sir; if I am not here, and you should happen to want me, I shall be there;—mayhap you may have something more to say to me."

"Thank ye, Careen—thank ye," replied Henry, thoughtfully; then suddenly exclaimed—"You'll take a sea-chest aboard for me, Ben, won't you?"

"That I will! and would take you too, if I dared," replied the good natured fellow. This was enough for De Florio, who darted off like an arrow, to the nearest warehouse, or "slop-shop," where he fitted himself out with a hammock, check'd shirts, and, in short, an assortment of every thing necessary for the voyage,—not forgetting a quantity of thread, pins, needles, tapes, scissors, and thimbles, to give away among the crew. All

these things he tumbled into a chest, which he also purchased ; and then hired a porter to carry it to Sally Hacket's. On his way to her house, he stopped, and bought a whole piece of flannel in a huge roll, which was standing out on the pavement by the shop door of a woollen draper's ; this also was conveyed to Anne's mother's. As De Florio hurried into the close little parlour, he saw Ben standing up and drinking a glass of grog.

" Ah, I am so glad you are not off yet, Careen !" exclaimed Harry, adding—" Now, my good fellow, if you will take this chest aboard the boat, the bale of flannel shall come presently. You see they are both directed for my father. Be sure you deliver them to him, will ye ?" Ben looked amazed.

" Yes, for sartin I will ; but what's to become of you, my little master ?"

" Oh, never mind me, I must contrive some—come, good Ben, don't think about me ; only take care of my things !"

" Well, Sir,—it seems a queerish job ; but I can't stay argufying." Then, turning once more to Anne,

whose eyes were red with weeping, he said,—(and his rough voice faltered as he spoke)—“ God bless you, my dear girl ! I didn’t think to have bid Anne *Hacket* good by any more ; but I dare say your mother knows best ! God bless you too, mother. You mustn’t be surprised if you find the *Flirt* has weighed anchor to-morrow morning : I’ve a notion the wind will go round in the night : there’s some cross currents up aloft, and I don’t expect to come ashore again ; therefore, once more, God bless you both !” So saying, and kissing, first the mother, and then the daughter, he hurried out, not trusting himself to look back. Anne’s grief burst forth the moment he left the room ; and, for some minutes, De Florio was too much moved by her sorrow to draw her attention to himself. At last, her mother having gone out, he said,—

“ Anne !”—she started, for she had forgotten every one, and every thing, but Ben, and his farewell,—“ Anne,” he repeated, “ I dare say Ben has told you something of me. I have but a few minutes left, or I would tell you all my story. I can now, however, only beg of you, for Ben’s sake, to assist in getting me on board the *Flirt*.” Anne

stared.—“ Yes,” he continued, “ go I must, and go I will, if it is possible for any contrivance to smuggle me into the vessel !—Now, Anne, I would try and persuade Ben to assist me, but I could not bear to get him into trouble ; but if *you* were to help me, instead of Ben, no blame could fall on any one but myself, when I shall be found on board.” Astonishment at this strange proposal had dried Anne’s tears ; and she asked the impetuous boy what he could mean ?

“ Look here, Anne, first help me to unroll this flannel, and then roll me up in it ; and tie over the end, where my head will come out, with some thin stuff or other—here, this will do,” snatching up, as he spoke, two or three yards of muslin, which Anne had just bought to make into caps.

“ Oh, Sir, you’ll rumple it !—please don’t pull it about—it’ll take all the stiffening out of it.”

“ Oh, hang the stiffening ! Here’s a rupee to buy some muslin with, and here’s another for a keepsake. I am sorry, Anne, that I am too poor to give you any more now ; I’ll not forget you, though, when Ben returns from India—come, don’t stand biting your nails.”

"I'm so feared, Sir, that poor Ben should get into trouble, upon account of this business," said she.

"I tell you, if he could be harmed by my scheme, I would not go. Come, I know you are a good-natured girl, as well as a pretty, for Ben told me so."

Anne smiled, and began to roll him up in the flannel, as he lay on the floor: it was no easy task, and during the intervals of their laughter, as she proceeded, Henry gave her directions, as to the manner in which she was to instruct Ben how to convey him, adding,

"Above all things, Anne, don't let him carry me with my head downwards, like a slaughtered sheep."

De Florio had tucked his feet up behind him, in order to shorten the appearance of this portentous bale of woollen,—so that its shape was so very awkward, that the draper's shopman would have scorned to acknowledge such an unsightly piece of goods.

His body, swathed like an Egyptian mummy, and his head enveloped lightly in the cherished

cap muslin, that he might breathe easily—there lay De Florio, waiting to be carried away. He was telling Anne to run out and hire a man to take him, and she was fearing that he would be discovered, when, fortunately, Ben himself came running in, to know why the other package from the young gentleman had not been sent.

Anne, pointing to the heap, told him it was ready,—bade him be particularly careful of it, for that it contained something very valuable, and begged Ben, not to let any one touch it but himself. The kind-hearted fellow, who guessed the whole contrivance, having once more taken a tender leave of his future wife, proceeded to raise the shapeless bundle, and then, with her assistance, he placed it safely on his shoulders head upwards! He now trudged off with it to the boat, bidding his lass cheer up, and come along with him to see them start.”

“Avast there, Careen!” exclaimed Sam Sprit, the other sailor; “we’d need have manned a barge to carry all this freightage. I can hardly stow away these-ere hampers, and the chest you hove in just now, and I’m sure we can’t no how take

that hulk as you've got there—we must leave that."

"No, Sam, it's agoing to General De Florio, and it mayn't on no account be left behind,—here, bear a hand, will ye? we'll soon right the cargo ; —there, I told you so. I'd as leave have a coil of wet cable, as carry that bale of goods—what a weight it is !"

It was dark, when the boat ran alongside of the Flirt, and our flannel roll was carefully hauled up the ship's side, carried away by Ben into the hold, and safely deposited on its "beam ends," without a hint having been given by De Florio, or a word from Ben, uttered. Soon afterwards, the hold was locked for the night, and our hero was left in total darkness. Irritable as was his disposition, he bore his present stifling, cramping, and most disagreeable situation, with patience and cheerfulness. He considered, that if the wind were not to go round, they would be unable to sail on the next day, and that, consequently, he must be obliged to keep concealed in the hold ; but that, if the wind were to become fair, it would not signify how soon he should be discovered ; so he lay pretty quietly for an hour or two, when he

was suddenly delighted by hearing the welcome sounds of weighing anchor. As soon, therefore, as he found, from the difference in the motion of the ship, that she was actually under way, (that is, sailing,) he contrived to liberate his right hand, and quietly crept out, like a moth from its chrysalis dwelling.

He felt a happy security in his new state of existence, and with this feeling of joy came that of hunger : he had been too busy and anxious to think of eating—in fact, he had scarcely tasted food since he dined with the Piercies. He now, therefore, began his voyage of discovery, in these unknown regions, in quest of an open cask of biscuit, one of which he well knew is always unfastened for the use of the ship's company. His search proved to be a service of labor and peril ; for not being so well acquainted with the bearings and soundings of *this* hold, as he had been with the hold of the Memnon, to every part of which his active disposition had carried him, he had here to explore and steer among the shoals of goods around, without rudder or compass. Now he ran foul of a rum puncheon, then nearly

knocked in his "*day-lights*" (eyes) against the sharp point of a packing case ; next he capsized a half empty hamper of bottled porter, and cut his hands among the broken glass, in searching for a bottle, from which he could take a refreshing draught. At length, he reached the desired haven, that is, the biscuit cask ; so, after having satisfied his hunger and thirst, he once more groped his way back again, to his friendly flannel bundle, and, making it his pillow, he soon fell fast asleep upon it.

The next morning, he was aroused from his refreshing slumbers by the noise of the door being unlocked ; and before he could move away, for he had slept close to it, the second mate stumbled against the bulky roll, and fell sprawling over our hero, who kicked and bawled most lustily, as the man's knees came in contact with his ribs. The mate, who, though less hurt, was more astonished than Henry, shouted and swore at the top of his lungs, so that this unusual uproar in the hold, brought down a whole dozen of the crew to ascertain the cause. One of the first was Ben, who

affected to be as much surprised at the sight of our hero, as the others really were.

“ Well, this bangs Europe any how,” as Pat Galhagan says—“ if I didn’t think this bale of flannel were the heaviest piece of goods I ever hove, and I said as much to you, didn’t I, Sam Sprit ?” exclaimed Ben.

“ What, do you go for to say as this little lubber were hid in the hulk as you stowed away ? Hah ! ha ! ha ! Well, ’tis as good as seeing the clown in the pantermine at Dock playhouse, hah ! ha ! ha !” shouted Sprit.

The mate, whose dignity (only !) had been hurt by his fall, (and, it may be, *fright*,) scrambled to his feet, and seizing Henry vigorously by his collar, as if he expected either a rescue, or that the boy would set off and run back to Portsmouth, dragged him through the crowd, saying, “ You come along to the captain, my young spark, and let’s hear what you will have to say for yourself to him.”

In three minutes De Florio stood before Captain Clear, who, having heard of this addition to

his ship's company, sternly desired our hero to explain his motive for coming aboard in this clandestine manner.

Nothing daunted by the captain's frown, he proceeded to relate as much of his tale as was necessary, and concluded by saying,

"I am the only son of General De Florio, of whom you must have heard, if you have ever been at Calcutta, and if you *do* know him, you will want no assurance from me, that my passage and all my expenses will be punctually paid by him, for he is an honorable man. I heard that your vessel had the full complement of her crew, or I would have offered myself as a cabin-boy."

Captain Clear felt that the noble looking youth before him *must* be the person whom he represented himself to be, and he immediately resolved to act by him so as to ensure his good report to the general.

Nothing of moment occurred, worth relating, for more than nine weeks, when, being off the coast of Africa, the vessel encountered one of the most

severe of those tropical tornadoes, which the crew ever experienced in that latitude—three degrees south.

This disaster occurred in the night—the sails were rent to ribands, the main and mizen-mast snapped, and the rudder carried away, leaving the vessel an ungovernable hulk upon the water. She lost her reckoning, and finally struck on a sunken rock. The confusion and consternation were now terrific. “All hands out!” “Boats a hoy!” “Get the stream-cable up from below!” and up it came, roaring across the hatchway. Pigs, sheep, ducks, geese, fowls, turkies, cows, united their various noises with the uproar.

“What water?” cried the captain. “Quarter less two, Sir,” was the reply. “What water forward?—what water abaft?—what water to starboard?—what water to port?” all which questions, various sailors flew to answer. “Two fathoms, Sir!” “Quarter less two!” Again she struck—guns of distress were fired—the terror and confusion increased—as the noble vessel shivered in all her planks, with the violence of

the shocks. Again the guns were fired—when, to the joy of all on board, they saw that help was near—their signals of distress were answered: Immediately, all hands crowded to the boats. In vain the captain besought, nay, *commanded*, his passengers, and crew to await the succour that would come; in vain he assured them the boats would be swamped with so great a load, in that heavy sea; they would not listen, for the opening seams of the ship, as she strained on the rock, warned them that she could not long hold together; but into the boats they crowded, and put off into the turbulent and raging billows. Dawn now began to break, as our disconsolate hero stood with Ben, leaning against the remnant of the splintered mizen-mast, keeping their eyes directed to that part of the horizon from which the flashes of the answering guns had been observed. The storm abated as suddenly as it had commenced; the light increased; the dark mass of a vessel could be faintly seen, against the pale gleam of coming day. Planks and beams, cracked and wrenched from the forecastle, were washed past the feet of De Florio, who, persuaded by Ben, kept his station, as the safest in the ruined

vessel. Still nearer came the ship—lighter grew the sky ; each bulge of the suffering hulk against the rock, added to the danger of the few who remained with her ; when Ben, whose coolness and courage had inspired Henry with confidence and admiration, now fearing that their footing could hold but little longer, lashed his young friend to a plank, and flung him overboard, into the foaming waters ; then, hastily seizing another, plunged overboard himself, just as a shriek of horror from those still on deck convinced him that the ship had gone to pieces. De Florio was borne on the tops of the billows, but his senses were too confused, with the danger of his situation, for him to be at all aware how long he had thus floated, when he heard the noises of a ship close to him, and soon felt himself drawn up, and laid upon her deck.

It was broad day-light, and much bustle prevailed around, among her own crew, and those who had escaped in the boats from the wreck.

Fresh shouts hailed the entrance into the vessel of every succeeding fellow creature, who was saved ; and all were too busy to attend further to Henry, after having merely hauled him aboard ;

he lay, therefore, pale, exhausted, and but half conscious, when a soft hand suddenly parted the wet clinging hair from his brows, a piercing scream sounded acutely in his ears, and a heavy weight fell across his neck.

Immediately after Henry De Florio's departure from Calcutta, his mother began to droop. The general, who had urged the necessity of their son being educated in England, began to repent of having induced his wife to consent to his absence, when he saw the effects that were produced on her, by anxiety and sorrow; and that Mabel, too, his daughter, pined unceasingly for her noble hearted brother. In short, physicians were called in; and change of air and climate being prescribed for Mrs. De Florio, the general gave up his commission, and in three months after our hero had left India, his mother wrote to her sister-in-law, Lady Dashwood, to say, they hoped to arrive in England about the following Christmas. This was the news to which his aunt alluded in her letter from Paris, and which she knew need not be communicated to him, before their return from Spain, in November, when it was her intention to visit him at Richester,

and be herself the bearer of the pleasing intelligence. In about four months after the letter had been sent off, General De Florio, with his wife and daughter, took his passage in the ship *Hermes*, quitted the Indian shores, and were overtaken by the same hurricane in which the *Flirt* was wrecked. Not one of the passengers had retired to rest during that awful night; and as soon as signals of distress from the suffering ship had been observed, all were anxious to assist in rescuing their fellow creatures from destruction.

The general and his wife were among the first to succour those who arrived in the boats; and having offered them every accommodation, they took their station on deck, to look out for, and save, any others who might be yet with the vessel. Henry, on his plank, had been first discovered by his mother,—who little suspected that it was her darling boy!—as he floated on the waves. He was considered to be dead, by those who grappled and hauled him aboard; and Mrs. De Florio waited but to point out another body, which was also dashed about by the rude buffets of the hissing brine, before she summoned Jama,

one of her black servants, to bring a cordial; she then hastened to the spot where the youth was lying.

Amidst the general confusion, her shriek of love and agony had been unnoticed; and when Jama (Henry's nurse) elbowed her way through the crowd, to that part of the deck where she saw the dress and amber-colored shawl of her mistress, she stood for a moment in stupid amazement at the scene before her, the dead body (as she supposed) of her dear young master, on which his mother lay fainting.

Throwing down the cordial, she flew across the deck, and seizing the general's arm, stood wringing her hands, unable to say any thing, but —“ Oh, Missis!—young Massa!—poor, dear, dead Massa Henry!” while her eyes seemed starting from her head. Mabel, now creeping up the companion ladder, and also guided to her mother by the dress and shawl, came to the spot, just as her father ascertained where his wife was lying. The scene that followed may be imagined. It was not till many hours afterwards that our little party could believe their meeting

to be real, or that they became tranquil enough to talk over the causes which led to their being once more all together.

The general's high sense of honor was hurt at the circumstance of his son having quitted the public school in which he had been placed ; but he could not help feeling that his noble spirited boy deserved but little blame, his previous education having ill fitted him to bear the tyranny, and submit to the mean nature of such a lad as Calcraft.

“ It is I who have been to blame, Harriet,” said he to his wife, as they walked the quarter-deck together on the following night—“ it is I who have caused all this sorrow and danger ; and our true hearted boy must not be punished for my headstrong pride ! Why did I seek to persuade you that his education could be better conducted in England than elsewhere ? How few of our acquaintance in India have been Englishmen, and how many gentlemen, well educated men, have we known, who have never set foot on English ground ! Why should not the education of a Spaniard, of an American, of a German, or, in short, that of

any private gentleman, in any civilized country, be sufficient for *my* son to receive? If I had thought thus reasonably and justly on this subject before, I should not so rashly have subjected his high principle and right feeling to be injured and contaminated by these vile cowards—*all tyrants are cowards*—nor would you, my love, have suffered the fears and anxieties of your late existence. No!” continued the general, with a quickened step, and raised voice, “no!—let the people who consider themselves the first, the greatest nation in the world, continue to educate their sons on this degrading principle;—let them sanction meanness and cruelty in their public schools, which no other civilized nation would tolerate—let the future nobles of the British senate exercise the province of slave drivers over *other* future nobles—let *them* be taught, let them exert in self defence, the baseness, cunning, and hypocrisy of slaves—*my son* shall never again be placed in the way of such worse than barbarous cruelty—such wilful degradation!”

“Oh, my dear Victor, how I rejoice to hear this determination. I did so fear you would send

the dear fellow again to that horrid Richester ! I am sure it would break his heart if you were.— But,” continued Mrs. De Florio, “do not let us condemn all public schools, because of the disgraceful practices, the stupid plans of this one ;— it cannot be that England should be able to boast of names so noble, if all her seminaries were thus corrupt, thus badly managed. How could parents endure that their children should be taught so much vileness ? How could the youths themselves *unpoison* their minds, and become, in after life, worthy members of society ? No, dear Victor, do not let us be unjust ; let us inquire, let us take the advice of our friends ; there must be schools that are better regulated than this at Richester appears to be, and to one of these we will send him.” And thus it was settled.

On the following morning, General de Florio took an opportunity of talking to Henry on the subject. He spoke mildly ; he was too just a man to hurt his son’s feelings causelessly, or to attach greater blame to him than his fault merited. Although the general had been a strict disciplinarian among his troops, he knew human nature too

well, and pitied it too much, to punish those minor faults that proceed from a sense of wounded honour. His father then represented to Henry the dangers to which his rashness had exposed him, and the sorrow which would have overwhelmed his parents in the event of his death by shipwreck, from which he had so narrowly escaped. He told him that he feared pride, silly pride, had occupied too great a share in the feelings which prompted him to leave Richester; that the mere blacking of shoes was no greater degradation than putting them on; and that though he (the general) was not anxious for his boy to become an expert footman, yet *this* was so trifling a drawback from the advantages that were supposed to be derived from a public education, that had he objected to perform this office, and had there been nothing more serious to complain of, he would have experienced his parent's heavy displeasure. "But, Harry," continued his father, "if a mean action has been proposed for you to commit; if injustice and wanton tyranny have been exercised upon you, or those around you; if feelings of independence,—if meekness, honesty, and upright-

ness, have been outraged by those who are in no way your superiors;—if ignorant and wicked by-laws have been made, by means of which some boys can, without fear of punishment, wound and distress the natures of those unfortunate youths who may be in their power;—then can I *not* blame you for flying from the disgraceful scene, as I should hope that, in your future life, you would scorn the fellowship of a despot. Strange,” added the general, speaking partly to himself, “that a nation, which prides itself on its glorious constitution, and its mild form of government, should inculcate or sanction habits of tyranny and despotism among its rising senators!—despotism, too, which would disgrace that very degraded set of men, the overseers of slaves on West Indian plantations! Strange, too, that while thousands of pounds, and millions of words, have been expended, on the abolition of slavery abroad, that a practice so wicked, so destructive, so utterly shocking to a well regulated mind, should exist on the very hearths—so to speak—of their own palaces! But, my boy, I see Mabel

is impatient to join her newly-recovered brother.—
I am going to talk with our worthy sailor.”

On the arrival of the *Hermes* at Portsmouth, Ben Careen was married to Anne Hacket; Mabel making the bride a handsome present, and Henry performing the same kindness towards his favourite Ben.

Sir Richard and Lady Dsahwood had returned from the Continent about a week before the arrival of their friends in England; and heard with alarm of their nephew's flight from Richester; their satisfaction, therefore, may be imagined, when they saw him enter the drawing-room in St. James's Square, with his parents and sister.

Henry's first care was to call in Arlington Street, where he found his friend Alfred, perfectly recovered, happy, and improving under the judicious management of a private tutor. He had become too, the companion, nay almost the idol, of his guardian: who had heard from his ward so much in praise of our hero, that, on his name being announced, he arose, hobbled towards him, and, shaking him heartily by the

hand, apologised for his rough treatment of him a few months before.

De Florio's next visit was to Clarges Street, to inquire for the health of Mrs. and Miss Piercy, and that of his friend Vincent. He found them all at home, and all delighted to see him. Miss Piercy had been married to Colonel Clinton about two months, and had just returned from a tour, during which they had called for Vincent, who had now left Richester entirely. The colonel had discovered that he was unhappily situated, in consequence of the same cause which had driven De Florio from school. Colonel Clinton was very rich; he had great influence in the army; and he resolved, as Vincent preferred a military life, to remove him from Richester, and place him at one of the military colleges.

An intimacy was quickly formed between the Piercies and the De Florios; and the friendship which had commenced between the youths in those unhappy school days which are *said* to be the happiest of our existence, (!), increased with their future lives. They both entered the army, after having acquired the necessary instruction.

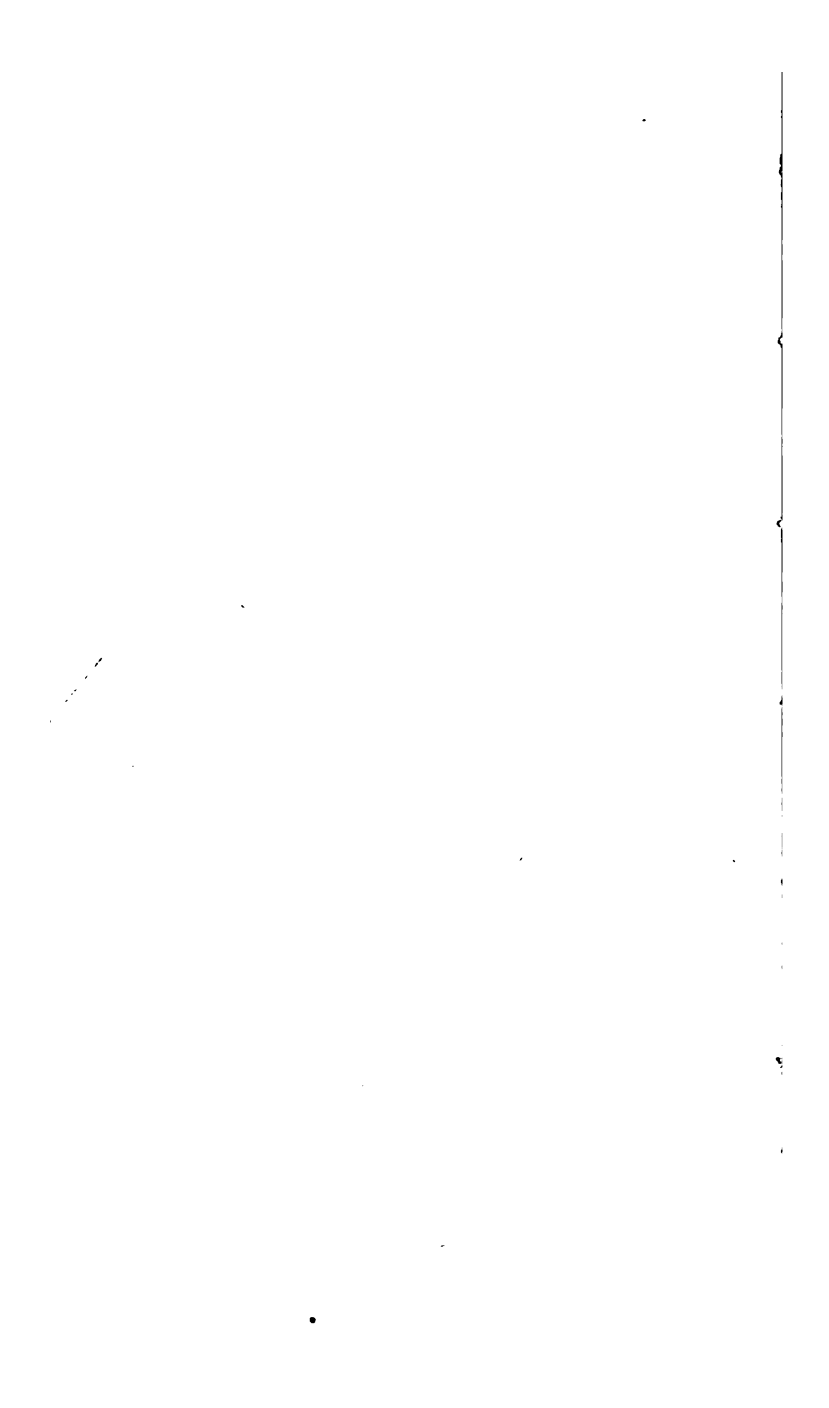
Alfred Darlington's disposition, was of a nature to prefer a peaceful and retired life; he became a scientific private gentleman; and his affection for Henry, was strengthened, by his marriage with the gentle Mabel de Florio.

Here we take leave of our young friends, sincerely wishing, that not one amiably disposed and sensitive heart, were *in reality* suffering from the cruel and degrading system of "FAGGING."

TRUE COURAGE;

OR,

BATHING AND BULLS.



TRUE COURAGE.

“MAMMA, William says he really will go into the water to-day; so he may get his towel and come with us, mayn't he?” asked Alfred Castleton of his mother.

“I doubt William's heart will fail him when he gets to the water's edge, Alfred; but he may walk to the park with you, certainly,” replied Mrs. Castleton.

“Thank you, mamma, thank you: I'm glad he is going. Halloo, William, get your towel! Papa is waiting with Arthur and Taunton. Make haste!” shouted Alfred, and in three minutes

Mrs. Castleton, as she sat at work, saw her husband, with their four boys, walking down the road to their pretty retired bathing place on the banks of the canal in Brakeley park. It was the pleasant Midsummer holidays, and the four brothers were all at home. The chief delight of Arthur, Alfred, and the youngest boy, Taunton, consisted in bathing. William liked it not; yet he tried very hard to conquer the terror which he felt at the idea of being under water; and after having for several days witnessed the delight with which his brothers had dabbled about; and having borne their jests at his alarm very patiently, he had this day *resolved* to go in without flinching. In about an hour after the party had left Woodside cottage, the smacking of whips, and the sound of merry voices coming up the road, announced to Bel Castleton and her mother, that the bathers were returning; and in a few minutes in they came, flacking their towels, and laden with news and wild flowers.

“Well, I was certain he would not go in!” exclaimed Arthur.

“La! and the water is so shallow where I

bathed,—only up to my shoulder blades ; and yet he wouldn't come in, though I stood close to him and ducked. Oh, how I did duck ! didn't I, Alfred ?” said little Taunton.

“ Oh, I never knew any thing so stupid ! If you had but seen him, mamma !” exclaimed Alfred. “ Before we got there I knew what would happen, for he was lagging behind us ; and then, when Arthur and I were swimming—we can both strike out four times now—there he stood on the edge of the pond, all of a tremble, with one leg in his trousers and the other dabbling about, up and down, over the water, like a May fly, and ”——

“ And though Taunton held out his hand to him, and told him it was so shallow, William would not even wet his foot. How cowardly !” exclaimed Arthur.

“ Yes, isn't he a coward, Bel ?” said Taunton.

“ *I'll* never ask for him to go again, I know,” said Alfred.

“ Well, really I am quite astonished to think what valiant boys I possess—*three* courageous sons, I mean,” exclaimed Mrs. Castleton. “ As to William's dislike of the water, it is not of the

slightest consequence, excepting that bathing is a wholesome and cleanly practice, and when it is enjoyed, must be delightful. But William's repugnance to the water cannot be called cowardice; many very brave men have felt the same objection to bathing, that he shows; and I must see very different proofs of his want of courage before I shall think of him as you do. Besides, is it kind, is it brotherly, to turn his fears into ridicule? He *pitied you*, Taunton, when you cried at the sight of the blood from your cut finger last week; and if I wished to encourage bitter feelings among you, I could furnish William with several proofs of *your* want of courage, Arthur. As to you, Alfred, though I am aware it has been said of you 'that, like Lord Nelson, you know not what fear is;' I consider that the assertion remains to be proved."

The three vain-glorious boys made no reply to their mother's observation, but soon left the room; and William, drawing near to his sister, said,

"Bel, I have found a new wild flower while they were bathing, and I have brought it home for you to see," emptying, as he spoke, his straw

hat crown on the table, where his mother and sister were at work.

“ *One* new wild flower, William ! what a number of beautiful specimens you have collected ! Look, mamma, he has found the spider orchis ! How glad papa will be. Did you show it to him ? ”

“ Oh, yes. I found the root of this flower, which broke off ; and papa brought the plant home, and is setting it in the ‘ wild bed.’ He said I was a famous fellow at finding new specimens, for—— ”

“ Aye, it was you who found the bee orchis that we had been so long hunting for ; now if you could but find the fly orchis, we should have almost all the varieties—— ‘ butterfly,’ ‘ dwarf,’ ‘ sweet scented,’ ‘ pyramidal,’ ‘ early purple,’ ‘ spotted,’ and the dear, beautiful ‘ bee,’ are all now in the garden,” said Bel.

“ You forget the ‘ military.’ I am afraid we shall never see *that*, Bel. And yet we might too, if we were to leave Somersetshire, and go and live near Reading ; for you know Sir James Smith

says it was found there," said William, who loved botany with all his heart.

"My boy," said his mother, "when are you to take Bel and me that beautiful walk which you mentioned, through the wood? This is a sweet day—quite one of *my* days; neither too warm nor too cool."

"Oh, mamma, I should be *so* glad if you would go this afternoon. Yes, it was the last time I went to Bodminster that I found out a new way through Brakely park, where your favourite fox-glove (*digitalis*) grows in *such* quantities; and where I saw thousands, I do think, of those pretty little pale blue dragon flies, that flit about just above the grass, and make one feel as if one's eyes were dazzled, they glance so quickly and are so slender. And in a shady spot, do you know, I found a tuft of your other favourite flower, still in blow, the pretty blue eyebright (*Veronica chamœdrys*), and *such* a snake!"

"A snake, William!"

"Oh yes, mamma. But that's nothing; never mind snakes, they are very harmless, though this

fellow, to be sure, did hiss at me famously ! I thought it was an adder, so I hit him such a whack with my ground ash stick that I sent him flying in two pieces ! When I took it up and showed it to papa, he told me it was a harmless snake ; for that adders are thinner, and are bluish underneath. Well, the heaths are flowering on the hill above, and the banks are covered with your favourite milk wort, Bel—the polygala, you know—all three colours too, blue, white, and lilac. And look here, I found to-day a violet, a *scentless violet*, of course ; such a curious colour, just like that silk dress of mamma's that she wore yesterday."

"What, the 'Esterhazy?'"

"Yes ; look is it not now ? And, oh, I have not shown you half the things yet ; but here is Francis come to lay the cloth for dinner." So off went William to wash his hands and brush his hair ; and away were swept the fading beauties that had cost so many steps, and had afforded the little boy so much delight in gathering.

The cloud had passed away from the sunny faces of the boys when the happy group assembled at the dinner table, and all was good humour.

"How pleasant it would be to eat our dessert under the shade of the great lime tree in the park," said Arthur.

"And to take Pet (the dog) and make him bathe," added Taunton.

"And to climb to the top of the tree, and rock about over your heads!" exclaimed Alfred.

"And then you know, Bel, we could begin and collect specimens for our herbarium;* and I'll ask Papa to give me some white blotting paper, and I'll make it to night, just as people are advised to make an herbarium, in that '*capital*' magazine of Natural History, which you read to us yesterday," observed William.

"So we could," but it is too soon after dinner; Mamma, should you like to have tea in the park?" asked Bel.

"Oh, tea! tea!—a gypsy tea!" exclaimed the boys.

Mrs. Castleton did not require much pressing, to induce her to comply with her children's wishes; and turning to her husband, she asked him if he would not accompany them.

* Herbarium, a collection of dried plants.

“ You remember those letters, my love, which must be answered to-day ; but I will hasten with them, and join your party, if that will please you ?” replied Mr. C.

“ Oh yes, my dear, certainly. Now finish your fruit, and away with you all,” said she to the young ones, who were soon off to play.

By five o'clock, the party was mustering strong ; the boys were loaded with whips, and sticks, and string, and kites, and bats, and balls, and fishing rods, and lines, and spades for digging worms with, and baskets to put the impossible fish into, large enough to contain five moderately sized salmon ; in fact, they were freighted as if for a seven months' voyage to some far distant desert land, where no toys are. Their mother could not forbear laughing at this goodly assortment of moveables.

“ Why, my dear fellows, you will be tired to death, of carrying all those goods and chattels ; one would think we were going to live *al fresco*,* and that you were providing against a dearth of such necessary articles ; pray do not take so many,

* In the open air.

you will not have time to make use of half of them !”

“ Oh, yes, *indeed*, mamma ! I shall want *this*, and Arthur will want *that*, and the string is to make reins for Pet, and to fly the kites with ; and—”

“ My dears, there is not a breath of wind, you will never raise them,” said their mother.

“ Well, then, the kites may stay ; but every thing else *must go*.”

“ But what, in the name of wonder, is this umbrella for, Alfred ?” said Mrs. Castleton to him, as he prepared to tuck one under his arm ; “ it will not rain ; and this old box with little Mary’s doll in it ! what *are* you going to do with them ?” added she, as he dangled them by a string on the handle of the cherished umbrella.

“ Oh ! I want to make a parachute of it ; and to send it off, with the doll in the box, when I am at the top of the lime tree, mamma ; *do* let me have them !”

“ What nonsense, Alfred ! but pray take them, as they seem so necessary to your happiness,” said his mother, smiling.

And so, laden like four young Crusoes, away they went ; Francis followed with the tea-things, and soon they were in the park, and in high glee round the gypsy tea-kettle, supplying the fire beneath it, with fuel.

“ Bel, do you think those cattle, yonder, look kindly disposed towards us ? ” said Mrs. Castleton, who, with her daughter, was arranging the cups and saucers.

“ Oh, yes, mamma, I have passed among them very often, and they are always quiet ; I do not think they ever run at people, ” she replied.

“ Well, upon my word, my dear, I am glad to hear it ; for I do not like the manner of that fierce-looking red cow, to say nothing of those two bulls !—but Francis must get us some cream from Milly Dibbs’s cottage ; has he filled the tea-kettle ? do, Bel ”——

Here, shouts of laughter made the mother and daughter turn round, when they saw the three boys looking up, and watching with noisy mirth, Alfred’s parachute, which a friendly gust of wind had taken from his hand, as he sat perched like

a crow on the top (bearable) bough of the linden tree, above them. The umbrella seemed fairly giddy (like the celebrated "paper kite,") with its unusual "elevation;" it wobbled, and heaved, then spun round and round, like an opera dancer in her short petticoats; next, it flapped to and fro, in the breeze; and at last, kicking up *it's one leg*, it fairly tossed out the unfortunate doll, which came sprawling down with out-stretched arms, and fluttering clothes, into the midst of our young group, and redoubled their merriment. Away went the parachute, as if it had been mad, skimming, and reeling, and twirling, and swinging, towards the herd of cattle, whose eyes were all fixed in alarm on this new and eccentric inhabitant of the air; in another moment, off they tore across the park, flinging up their haunches, and tossing their heads, to the infinite amusement of the young Castletons.

"Oh, mamma, what fun! I never thought we should laugh so! Look at the doll! both its eyes knocked out! How she came sailing, didn't she?"—and much more to the same purpose, said

little Taunton and his brothers, as soon as they could recover their breath.

“Now let us harness Pet,” said Arthur : so Pet was forthwith caught, and traced and braced with stout twine ; a crack of the whip, and a *four-voic'd shout*, then started him off. Now Pet had a very independent notion of travelling in harness ; so he scampered, “at his own sweet will,” in all directions, jostling and upsetting his young friends, in the most free and easy manner, imaginable. He was a fine and powerful spaniel ; and his inclination suddenly leading to the water, in order, probably, to get rid of his companions, away he dashed, at a swing gallop, so as to drag William, his immediate driver, at so quick a pace, that they soon outstripped the rest of the party. On rushed Pet—“Whoy !” cried William, “Stop, Sir !—come back ! oh !—here—Pet ! Pet ! Pet ! whoy, I say ! oh ! I shall be in the water !” and in flounced Pet. The string had got twisted round one of William’s buttons, and he could not unwind it ; a fortunate stump of a willow, however, saved the lad a dreaded “ducking,” for he fell against the tree, and the

resistance tore out the button from his jacket, so he only slipped into the soft mud of the banks, which caused a partial eclipse of his white trousers.

"We thought you were going to bathe against your will, William," said Arthur ; who now, with his brothers, came panting up to the edge of the water.

"I thought so, too," replied William, wiping his muddy clothes, so as to extend the mischief to a ridiculous excess.

"Come, let us go back to mamma, and Pet must follow when he chooses, for he won't come to my whistling. See, he has swum across, and is scrambling up the opposite bank," said Alfred. So away they went.

The arrangements for tea had proceeded admirably : clustering flames were playing up the sides of the tea-kettle, which was slung in the real gypsy fashion, from the top of three stout stakes driven into the ground ; the water was boiling away in a very bustling, not to say boisterous, manner ; a goodly portion of cream had been sent by Milly Dibbs to which she had added *such* a

dish of strawberries, as our young party thought they had never seen before,—so red,—so large,—so fragrant,—so glossy,—so beautiful ! The scarlet berries were flanked by two substantial mounds of bread and butter ; and in front stood a noble bastion of plum cake, which Mrs. Castleton had ordered the day before.

“ Come, my dears, Bel and I are waiting. William, where have you been, to make yourself so muddy ? ” exclaimed his mother : and then his narrow escape from a bath was related ; and again the boys talked and laughed over their fun with the doll and the dog ;—and more fun was planned, and more laughter anticipated, while the fruit and the fortifications gave way quickly before the vigorous attacks that were made upon them. Oh, it was a merry party !

Mrs. Castleton was seated on the turf, with her back to the open part of the park, in which she had first observed the cattle, the children were sitting round their grassy tea-table, Francis was gone to pay Milly for her fruit and cream, and the boys were planning a swing between two neighbouring trees, when they were all startled by

the shrill tone of a bull, at some little distance, accompanied by the yelping of their dog. The deeper lowing of many cows now approached; and before they had time to conjecture the cause of this noise, they saw the whole herd of cattle, their tails stretched out, galloping across the park, with Pet at their heels. On they came, pounding the ground, and bellowing with either rage or terror, or both.

A formidable bull led the van, and was evidently making towards our little party! All the young ones were on their feet in an instant, and had run for protection among the trees, before their mother (who had sat with her back to the cattle) was aware of her danger: when William, as he fled away, looked round to see if every one had left the spot, and beheld his mother yet sitting in the very direction that the bull was taking. With an inward shriek, he turned, and rushed back again, screaming—"Oh, mamma!—mamma!—the bull!—the bull!" then seeing the umbrella which lay beyond her, and remembering the story of the Bengal tiger, which was frightened by an umbrella, he seized, and flung it open full in the

animal's face, just as it arrived within a few feet of his mother ! The creature was checked for a moment, but it was only for a moment :—he stamped furiously, and shook his tremendous head ; then making a sudden plunge, he tossed the umbrella that was in his way, which went skimming off, high over his back.

Mrs. Casleton had by this time arisen, and her first impulse was, to run to a place of safety ; but the sight of her son's great danger stopped her : with sudden energy, and presence of mind, she snatched up the tea-pot and her shawl, and flung them with violence in the animal's face. The hot tea terrified him, and the shawl, twisting round his horns, dropped over his eyes, and blinded them, so that he could not see to trace the footsteps of his intended victims ; but as the mother and son ran towards the nearest tree, the enraged bull proceeded at random in his headlong fury, and in another moment, they beheld him trampling among their tea-things, then rushing against the boiling kettle, it was instantly upset into the fire ! The crash made by the breaking stakes, the hissing noise and steam from the extinguish-

ing fire, the heat, and the scalding water, the screaming of our party, the hallooing of Francis, and Mr. Castleton, who now joined them, the barking of the dog, and the terror and rage of the furious animal, formed a scene of confusion not to be described.

Milly Dibbs and her husband—she with a broom, and he with a pitchfork—had also joined their forces; and such is the wonderful power of man, over the mighty animals which he is allowed to control, that as the shawl now fell from the horns of the bull, and he saw the resolute eye, and raised arm of Ben Dibbs, he was quieted in an instant; and wheeling suddenly round, he galloped back to the herd, which had stood still, as if looking on, and waiting to follow their leader to war or peace, to another attack on our party, or a return to their pasture. The bull, (as if to shew his generalship,) having been routed in one battle, resolved to wreak his vengeance on the harassing dog, which still yelped and flourished about among the cattle, with an exceeding appearance of valor. The moment, however, that Pet found the late skirmishing, changed to a deadly

onset, and that the whole herd was resolutely making at him, he turned short round, and lowering his flag-like tail, scudded across the park, and took refuge in the water, the cattle following him to the bank.

In the mean time, what had become of our poor terrified group? Mrs. Castleton's courage had failed, the moment it was no longer needed, and with a shudder, she sank down, weak and pale, against a tree—Bel and William were soon kneeling by her side. Arthur came scrambling out of a “sunk fence,” into which he had jumped; Taunton peeped from behind a portly elm; and Alfred came quietly down from his secure shelter among the boughs of the oak, under which his mother was seated.

“My dearest Jane!” said Mr. Castleton as he hastened to his wife, “what a narrow escape has this been!—how thankful we ought to be for your safety. Do not restrain your tears, my love, weeping will relieve your feelings. What noble presence of mind you displayed! I saw the whole frightful scene, as I came down the hill path; but I was too far from you to give any assistance. I saw

my flying children too, all but that dear, courageous boy, of whom Mr. Bowden, (their school-master,) has so truly said, 'he knows not what fear is.' Nay, do not shrink back, my noble Alfred, your valour has saved the life of your invaluable mother. Ah! that my poor William had but a grain of your courage; but bathing, even terri——"

"Alfred!—oh no, my love, it 'was our dear, affectionate, courageous William, who hazarded his own safety to protect me!" exclaimed his mother, whose feelings thus suddenly roused in another direction, again burst forth, as she flung her arms round the little fellow's neck, and sobbed upon his shoulder. "Ah!" added she, in a broken voice, "what should I have done, if my brave boy had been injured!"

"Oh, mamma," replied William, in a trembling tone, "it was *your* presence of mind and goodness, that saved me, for if you had not thrown——"

"My dear and excellent boy!" exclaimed his father, interrupting him, "you have delighted my heart beyond my powers of expression. God

“bless you !—bless you both !” added he, fervently, and hastily kissing his wife, and wringing William’s hand, he hurried away to hide his emotion.

Francis, Ben Dibbs, and Milly, were all busily employed in collecting the fragments of china, which the bull had smashed, (many of which adorn Mrs. Dibbs’s humble mantel-shelf to this day,) when the Castleton family approached the spot. Again William felt his heart heave with delight, as he heard their well meant, though somewhat coarse, commendations of his bravery.

“ Master William,” said Francis, in a low tone of voice, as he stooped near the little boy, “ I wouldn’t but have done what you did for a year’s wages ! I couldn’t have thought you had so much courage. I seed ye all, as I were a setten taking a glass of strong beer with Ben. Ben had just come in from turning the mixen, (dung heap,) and luckily, ye see, he’d got his pitchfork with him ; so I’d just drunk to him and Milly, and the glass were at my lips, when, as I looked out towards the park, what should I see,

but that vicious beast, a coming full drive right towards Misses ! ‘ Dang it,’ says I, ‘ Ben, look there !’ down went Milly’s glass, and out I runs, and they both after me, scarce knowing why ; and—oh, Master William, how proud and glad you must be, Sir.”

Milly and Ben, in still plainer terms, expressed their delight and astonishment, which Mr. and Mrs. Castleton wisely curtailed, by changing the conversation to the little domestic affairs of the worthy couple. His parents did not wish that the noble feelings of their son’s heart should have any others, of a meaner nature, mixed with them ; the injudicious praise of the cottagers would, they feared, do harm.

The sun had now set, and our party turned their steps towards home. Mrs. Castleton strove, by every gentle and cheerful means, to raise the spirits of her little family ; but each felt a weight that her kind attempts could not remove. Her husband was silent, from mingled feelings of gratitude and joy. Bel was pale and full of terror ; every bush she fancied a bull ; and she clung to her mother, whom she loved so truly, with

continued fears for her safety, now that she had seen it so threatened. Arthur and Alfred felt, as they supposed, no boys had ever felt before—so sorry, so cowardly, so ashamed; and no efforts of their kind mother could set them at peace with themselves; the little Taunton was too young to feel as acutely as his brothers felt, and his silence was caused as much by the fatigue of constant exertion during a long summer's day, as by any unpleasant recollections of his vain-glorious boasting. •

William—but William's silence we can all account for; among his pleasant thoughts, came that most delightful one, to a well disposed mind, that he could no longer be called that odious name, a *coward*,—a name which he had always felt he did not deserve; though, as he had had no means of convincing his brothers to the contrary, but by going with them into the water, (to him an awful idea,) he had been obliged to endure the reproach of cowardice.

When the young Castletons came to kiss their mother, before they went to bed, as was their custom, Arthur and Alfred seemed anxious to

say something that oppressed their spirits ; and, at last, Alfred accomplished these few words :—

“ Mamma, Arthur and I are so sorry, that we couldn't—that we forgot—I mean that we didn't come to you in the park, when William ran,—but,—we never thought—”

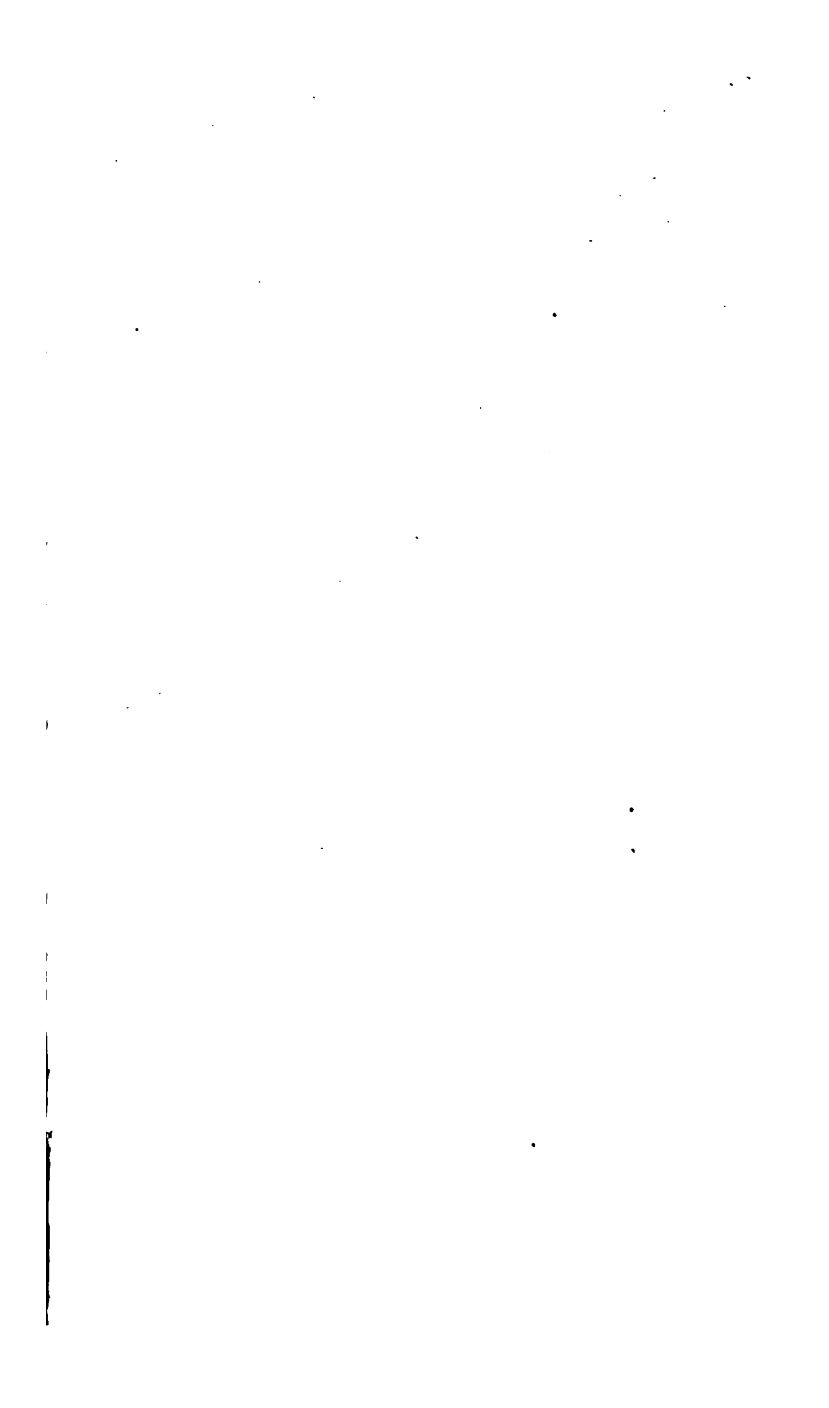
“ My dear boys,” replied their mother, gravely, but kindly, “ do not suppose that I feel displeased with you, or that I expected such an act of courage to be performed for me, by any one ; sure I am, that you both love me, and would gladly have done for me what your brother did. I do not think *you cowards* ; but I cannot regret that an opportunity has been afforded William of shewing you, that with a great dread of plunging over head in cold water, there may exist a noble and admirable degree of ‘ *true courage* ’—Good night !”

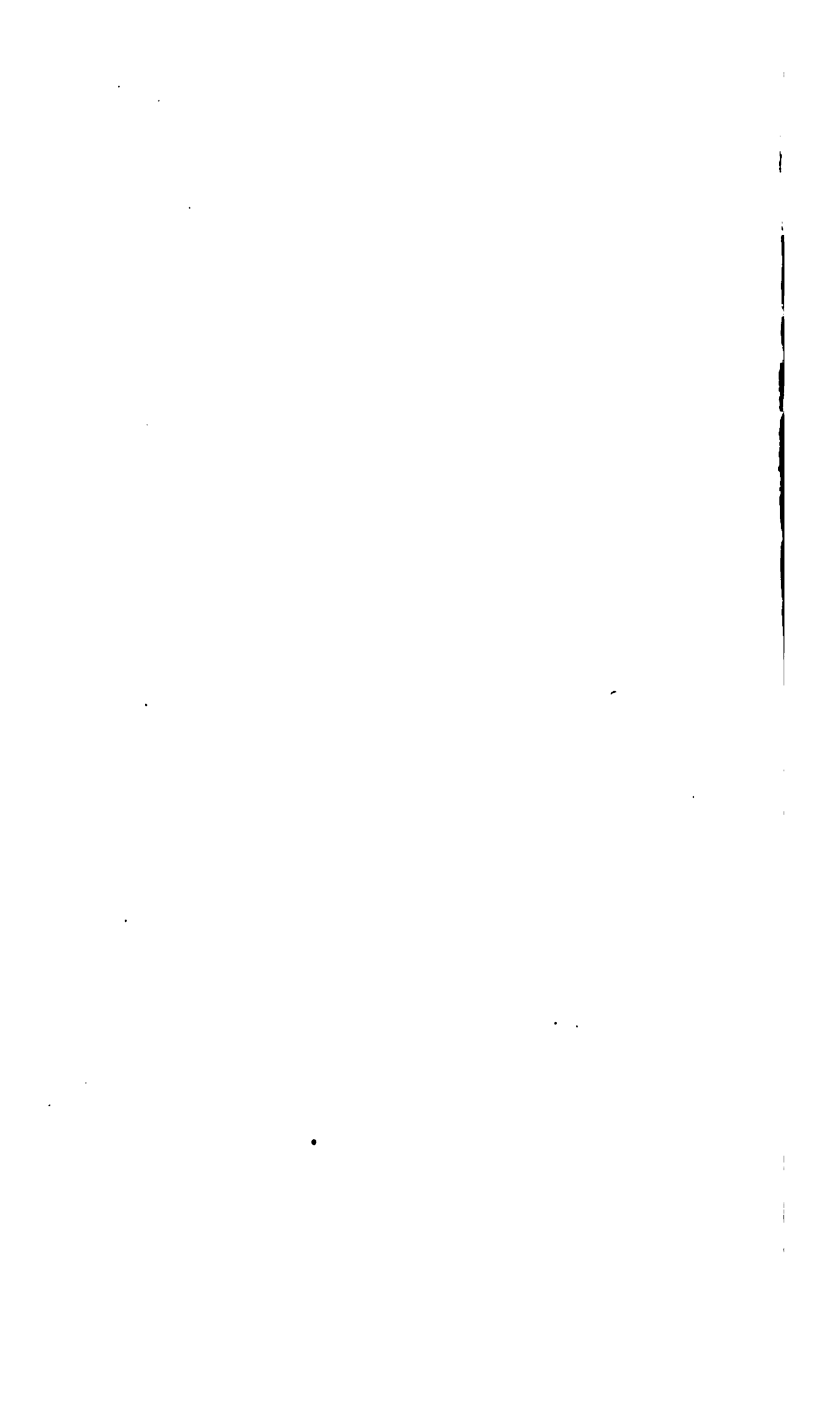
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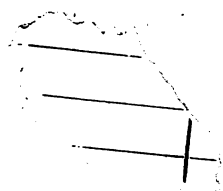
SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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